






AMERICAN FOUNDATION
FOR THE BLIND INC.

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The BEACON

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE
INTERESTS OF THE BLIND

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SOME LINES OF PROGRESS

LAST month we mentioned one or two outstanding characteristics of the past year's work for the blind. This month we propose to indicate a few lines along which we consider progress would be welcome during the coming year.

Broadly speaking, any marked advance in the blind world must come from three sources, namely, the blind themselves, the voluntary agencies for the blind, and the State. The maximum advance would naturally spring from a state of complete harmony between the three sources actuated by a common ideal; while the advance would be minimized in extent by the failure of all three sources to reach accord as to the object and means of attainment.

It is obvious, therefore, that the greatest essential to progress is the creation and stabilization of a state of complete harmony. We expressed our opinion last month that the spirit of co-operation was growing, so we see no reason why complete harmony should not be forthcoming in the near future. Harmony, of course, does not imply the elimination of competition; but, firstly, it banishes discord and, secondly, it produces by the correct arrangement of parts a satisfactory entity.

The creation of the harmonious state can be accelerated by the employment of judicious propaganda. From such propaganda all public criticism by one recognized agency for the blind of another agency for the blind should be absent. This method of attracting public

attention is largely a thing of the past, as most organisers of appeals now understand that such criticism, either verbal or printed, does incalculable harm to the cause of the blind as a whole and merely bewilders the public into apathy. If a charitable body wishes to raise money it should adopt the ordinary business policy of stating the value of its own achievements rather than the valuelessness of the work of its competitors. Any differences should be settled privately by the proper umpires.

The propaganda of most value to the blind is that which presents the work and ideals of the blind community as a whole rather than that which deals with the work and ideals of a single agency for the blind. Accordingly, we should like to see agencies for the blind throughout the country join together in preparing and launching a systematic propaganda campaign. The object of the campaign would be to give the last thrust to the erroneous idea still prevalent amongst the public that blind people are abnormal and of no actual use in this world—simply objects of pity. Readers of THE BEACON may consider that this idea is already dead, but they must recollect that, in affairs of the blind, they are highly educated people, and that millions still express astonishment when they learn that "the blind beggar and his dog" is almost an anachronism.

Let us make it wholly so. Then it is probable that a greater interest will be aroused in the evolution of the blind from dependence to independence; that leading scientists and employers of labour will turn to the subject

of the blind with the zest all acute minds find in new problems; that further ways and means of lessening the handicap of blindness will be discovered; that specialised work will be found in which the delicacy of touch and the concentration of thought that compensate the sightless may be utilised to the full; while it is quite within the bounds of possibility that jobs may be found in which lack of physical sight may prove an asset rather than a disability.

We do not think these hopes are too extravagant, but if they wing towards Utopia, it is right that they should do so. If those of us who are working for the blind decapitated our ideals and shod our heels with lead, we should most surely not only drift backwards into stagnancy but render ineffective the labours of our predecessors. In dealing with problems relative to the blind, imagination must be the spark to kindle the enthusiasm which alone can solve the problems of life. We are not working for one generation alone; we are building for future generations on the foundations laid in the past. This may sound trite, but we are convinced that imagination has yet to bear on many matters in the blind world before theory ripens to practice.

In addition to the initiation of a national system of propaganda, we think there should be a greater inclination amongst all agencies for the blind not simply to arrive at agreements relative to the collection of funds, but to make use of each other's special experience. For instance, it would be interesting to know how many schools for the blind still teach music by the old methods, making no use of the Revised Music Notation. In how many Homes are the blind still talked to and treated as rather tiresome children? In how many workshops and institutions are any special qualifications of blind individuals systematically sought for and developed by all available means? How many societies for the blind recognize the vital importance of regular exercise and recreation? In how many districts are readers of Braille in a minority?

We are ignorant on these points, but we feel sure that every institution for the blind in this country has something to teach and something to learn from other institutions.

It must always be remembered, however, that to a certain extent the progress of the work of any institution is dependent on the

people for whom it is working. Generally speaking, we believe that the blind are only too ready to respond with alacrity to every movement which may better their mental or social condition. But there are exceptions, and these exceptions frequently retard excellent progressive movements. Take Braille, for instance. Not a single blind person should be unable to read embossed type. A blind person who cannot read with his fingers is as handicapped as a person who cannot read with his eyes. In addition every blind person should try to secure at least an elementary knowledge of music, and to make himself acquainted with the principles of wireless—that discovery which may bring to the blind unimaginable benefits. There should be a greater keenness for education, and a greater desire to take advantage of every opportunity for increasing interests and activities. The most lasting and valuable results are obtained in cases where the enthusiasm of those interested in the welfare of the blind is equalled by the enthusiasm of the blind themselves.

As far as the extension of State aid for the blind is concerned, we are of the opinion that any State aid which tends to provide the blind with suitable opportunities for progressing by individual initiative and merit would be entirely for the good of the blind community; but any State aid which tends to herd the blind as a whole and destroy individual initiative would be entirely for the bad.

The present system by which the State renders assistance to the blind largely through the voluntary institutions appears to us to be admirable. Effective use is made of wide experience; the personal interest and consequent sympathy of the public is maintained; and the blind are treated as individual units, not as ciphers in a total.

We have here only touched upon one or two very important subjects, but we hope later to deal in detail with some of the questions raised.

THE EDITOR.



DURING the Budget debates in Paris, M. Scapini, who was blinded in the war, made his first set speech since he entered the Chamber of Deputies at the last General Election. His speech contained a number of important statistics which he read from a Braille manuscript amid the cheers of the House.

PERSONALITIES

IN THE WORLD OF THE BLIND

ALEC TEMPLETON, L.R.A.M.



It is recorded that at the age of four Mozart had already begun to write little pieces for the harpsichord, and when but a child of six he made his first public appearance, at Munich, as a concert performer.

The fact that one of the best known and most eminent musicians in this country has often in playful

seriousness (if that is an admissible term), referred to Alec Templeton as "young Beethoven," must be my excuse for bringing the name of that clever and interesting boy in juxtaposition with that of one of the most precocious of the world's musical geniuses. For Alec Templeton (born on July 4th, 1910), blind from birth, "made up" his first little essay in musical composition (a short, slow movement), at the age of four, and although he is now only eighteen and a half years old, he has composed a Concerto for Piano and Orchestra as his *chef d'oeuvre*

to date, in addition to a lot of other music. But I anticipate!

At the age of nine he went to Worcester College for the Blind, and, while there, came under the tuition of Sir Ivor Atkins, the well-known composer, organist of Worcester Cathedral, and conductor of the "Three Choirs" Festivals. While at Worcester, he won the College prize for Music each year, and passed several musical examinations with "honours." He also won, while still at school, a prize offered by the British Broadcasting Company for a Folk-dance, which has since been orchestrated and broadcast from 2.L.O.

Upon leaving College he studied music with various excellent teachers, notably Mr. Harold Craxton, Professor of Pianoforte Playing at the Royal Academy of Music, perhaps one of the greatest exponents of the art of "accompanying" in this country. He also came under the notice of Mr. G. G. Beale, Mus.Bac., F.R.C.O., the organist of Llandaff Cathedral, and of Sir Walford Davies, both of whom took a generous interest in the boy's career.

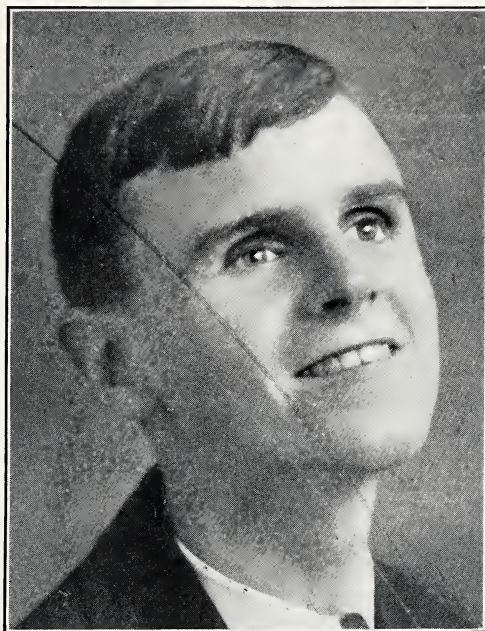
It will be remembered that Sir Walford Davies (organist of the Chapel Royal, Windsor), holds the Chair of Music in the University of Wales; and, as Chairman and Director of the National Council of Music of Wales, his official residence is in Cardiff, fortunately for the boy, whose home was in Cardiff.

Although young Templeton had, as a child, often played in public, yet his real *début* on the concert platform was at the Whitehall Rooms, Cardiff, when fifteen years of age.

In the following year he took the L.R.A.M. (performer's) Diploma, and last year played Beethoven's "Emperor" Concerto, as solo pianist, at Cardiff, with full Symphony Orchestra (70 players).

He has also been a familiar figure at Competitive Musical Festivals, such as Bristol, Bournemouth, Cheltenham, etc., at which he has taken many prizes as a solo pianist, and for the last twelve months he has been giving recitals in London and the provinces, having thus definitely started on his professional career.

During one of these tours he entered for the National Piano Playing Contest recently



MR. ALEC TEMPLETON, L.R.A.M.

inaugurated by the *Daily Express*. There were some 20,000 entrants for this competition, which was open, in four grades, according to age, to all throughout the British Isles. Seventy-two valuable prizes in the form of pianofortes by the best English makers, were offered, including six "grands." The contests were spread over several months, and by December 1st, the competitors were reduced to 16, four in each grade. In the highest grade—open to all from 18 years upwards—Templeton's name appeared, and the battle royal of the mighty four was fought out in London, at the Kingsway Hall, before a special Board of Adjudicators, musicians of the highest rank. The award of second place was given in favour of our young friend, amid the vociferous acclamation of the vast audience assembled, consisting of many ex-competitors, together with people well known in the musical world. The prize gained by Templeton was a magnificent Brinsmead "Grand" Piano, and a Special Diploma testifying that he was the "runner up" in the Final "Grade A" test, the winner of the first prize being a youth of 19, Mr. Cyril J. Smith, of London, a student at the Royal College of Music.

By this magnificent triumph Templeton not only at once steps into fame, but renders notable service to the cause of blind musicians by demonstrating, in the most public manner possible, that given anything like an equal chance with the sighted, the sightless musician can be trusted to hold his own with credit.

I ought to refer to Templeton's remarkable power of quick memorization. We often hear it glibly stated, by the ignorant, that such and such a person can reproduce, note for note, a piece of music which he may have heard but once or twice!

Oftener than not this is sheer nonsense, but not in the case of Templeton, who has what might be called a "photographic memory" (a very rare gift), and who can do incredible things in this particular line.

As a composer, we may hear of him later, but up to the present he has not "rushed into print," though he has written a number of charming works. This may be real wisdom, for even Beethoven wished some of his earlier effusions could have been destroyed and forgotten in favour of compositions which he considered more mature, and what great artist has there ever been who would not have liked to have burnt most of his "early efforts"?

Although so advanced a performer for his years, he is quite a boy at heart, lovable and impulsive to a degree, and absolutely devoted to music.

We hope he will steadily advance in the Art in which he has made such wonderful progress, and that many of the prominent musicians who have recently heard what he can do will endeavour to help him along in his artistic career, by watching and directing him amid the many dangers incident to the life of a young musician who has suddenly "loomed large" in the public eye; so that his undoubted genius may be developed not only to his own benefit, but in order that he may prove, by his remarkable achievements, to what height the blind may aspire and rise as executants and composers.

EDWARD WATSON.



Mr. WILLIAM WOLSTENHOLME

THE honorary Fellowship of the Royal College of Organists was bestowed on this distinguished blind musician by the Council of the College in November last. He was also elected an honorary member of the College.

These are the greatest distinctions the College can bestow, and both the recipient and the College itself are to be congratulated, the honour being reciprocal.

In January last Mr. Wolstenholme was invited to give the College Recital, this invitation being extended only to organists of the highest repute.

Following so closely upon his election also as President of the London Society of Organists for the year 1927, it would seem that Mr. Wolstenholme could not receive any higher recognition of his claims by the members of the organists' profession in this country.

May he live long to enjoy the distinctions so wholeheartedly conferred by his professional brethren as their cordial tributes to his genius.



MR. ROBERT GILLING, of Woodlands, an ex-deputy at Brodsworth Main, who has been blind for six years, has been presented with the hon. teacher's certificate of the Royal Life-Saving Society for swimming and life-saving.

THE BLIND BEFORE BRAILLE



HUNDRED years ago a lamp was lit which to-day burns with a bright and steady glow. Louis Braille gave to the blind a means of expression for which his memory must ever be held in grateful reverence.

Before him much had been done for their welfare, but with the invention of his system of reading and writing came a turning-point in their lives, and their education and training assumed a deeper significance than before.

It is with the general condition of the blind before the introduction of the Braille system that we are concerned in this article. To-day the recognised position of the blind in society, the sane outlook on their capabilities, and the endeavours made to help them in developing their talents are but signs of the increasing rationalism of the times. We have indeed advanced since the day when human beings who were "not quite like other people" were objects of pity, derision, or even of superstitious veneration. The knowledge that they were capable of developing their talents or powers—that they were even capable of *possessing* such talents and powers—came late and by slow degrees.

From the hospital which St. Basil established at Cæsaræa in the 4th century, to the National Institute for the Blind in the 20th is a far cry. This hospital is the first recorded attempt to help the blind in a systematic way. We next hear of a refuge for the blind established in Syria by St. Lymnee in the 6th century, and of an institution founded by St. Bertrand, Bishop of Le Mans, in the 7th century. Of the nature and working of these institutions there is, we believe, no record.

Now comes a gap of six centuries, and in 1260 we hear of Louis IX. of France founding a hospital for the blind in Paris. The legend that it was endowed for 300 soldiers blinded in the Crusades has since been contradicted. Be it as it may, L'Hospice des Quinze-Vingt exists to-day and has 300 inmates who are still assisted by pensions and outdoor relief. From then until the 18th century we occasionally hear of attempts to prepare apparatus by which the blind could read and write. Miss E. R. Scott, in an interesting pamphlet, alludes to the string writing of the Mexicans as probably the earliest form of tangible

writing for the blind. In the 16th century an Italian physician, Girolamo Cardan, meditated on how they could be taught to read and write by touch, and in 1517 Francesco Lucas in Spain and Rampazetto in Italy taught the blind to read by means of large wooden letters. The first record of writing by the blind is on a tablet covered with a thin coating of wax on which letters were traced with a stylus; this was invented by a mathematician in Nuremberg called Harsdoeffer.

Intelligent minds were bestirring themselves on the subject of the psychology of the blind, and in this matter both the French and the Italians appear to have taken a prominent part. In 1646 there was published a book in Italian and French called "L'Aveugle Affligé et Consolé," and four years later a Jesuit, Lana Terzi, wrote on the "Instruction of the Blind." Now we come to the better known works on the subject, first that of Diderot who, in 1740, wrote his "Lettre sur les Aveugles à l'Usage de Ceux qui Voient" (A Letter on the Blind for the Use of those who can See), a philosophical treatise showing how the intellectual and moral nature of man is modified by blindness. The late Mr. W. H. Illingworth, in his "History of the Education of the Blind," says: "It is interesting to note in the first place how accurately M. Diderot's deductions coincide with the most advanced ideas on the subject to-day and, in the second place, how utterly the teachings of his philosophy were disregarded for a whole century and more by those who took in hand the education of the blind." To quote at any length from this essay is impossible in the narrow confines of the BEACON, but one passage should be given, as follows:—"One of our company asked the blind man whether he would not be very glad to have eyes. 'Were it not for curiosity,' said he, 'I would full as lieve have long arms. My hands, I think, would inform me better what is going on in the moon than your eyes or your telescopes. Besides, the eyes sooner cease to see than the hands to touch, that to improve the organs I have would be as good as to give me that which is wanting in me.'" Referring to this passage, Mr. Illingworth says: "The last sentence sums up the whole aim of blind education," and quotes Dr. Eichholz, H.M. Inspector for Special Schools, as saying: "Education of the blind absolutely fails in its object in so far as it fails to develop

the remaining faculties to compensate for the want of sight." Thus we see that as early as 1740 Diderot paved the way for our modern ideas on the subject. Some of the views expressed in his essay led to his imprisonment in the Bastille, and here, it is reported, Rousseau visited him and suggested a system of embossed printing. Without doubt Diderot's essay aroused both interest and curiosity, and caused the condition of the blind to be examined more closely than before. The seed was sown, but it was some years before any great advance in their condition is to be noted.

The *Encyclopaedia Londinensis* in its 1810 edition has an interesting section on the blind. Having mentioned various professions which could be adopted by blind people, it goes on to say: "The most important view we can entertain in the education of a person deprived of sight is to . . . enlarge, as far as possible, the sphere of his knowledge and activity. This can only be done by the improvement of his intellectual, imaginative or mechanical powers; and which of these ought to be most assiduously cultivated the genius of every individual can alone determine. Not,"—this is an interesting point—"that improvement should be rendered quite easy to them . . . for all difficulties which are not really or apparently insuperable heighten the charms and enhance the value of those acquisitions which they seem to retard. But care should be taken that these difficulties be not magnified or exaggerated by imagination. . . . Parents and relations ought never to be too ready in offering their assistance to the blind in any office which they can perform, or in any acquisition which they can procure for themselves, whether they are prompted by amusement or necessity. If he has a mechanical turn, let him not be denied the use of edged tools, for it is better that he should lose a little blood, or even break a bone, than be perpetually confined to the same place, debilitated in his frame and depressed in his mind. . . . In the education of a blind man it is infinitely better to direct than supersede his own exertions. . . . It will be highly proper for someone to superintend his motions at a distance without seeming to watch over him."

In past numbers of the BEACON reference has been made to blind men and women whose names have been recorded because of their attainments in an age when educational facilities for the blind were lacking. In many instances ingenious attempts were made to

provide them with apparatus. Thus we read of Nicholas Saunderson (born 1682), the distinguished blind professor of mathematics, inventing an abacus or calculating table by which he worked out his problems, and of the German Weissenburg devising various contrivances for teaching his pupils algebra, trigonometry and geometry. In his maps the boundaries were marked in silk knots on the paper, the rivers were marked in wire, the mountains by wooden pegs, the cities and towns by pins of varying sizes. Mlle. de Salignac, the talented Frenchwoman, learned music from characters in relief "which were placed in raised lines upon the surface of a large table. These characters she read with her fingers and then she executed the air upon her instrument." On the maps by which she studied geography "the parallels and meridians were of brass wire, the boundaries of kingdoms and provinces were marked out by threads of wool or silk of varying thicknesses, the rivers and towns by pin-heads, some larger, others smaller, and the towns by drops of sealing-wax proportioned to their size." In these individual cases successful work was accomplished, but some years were to elapse before any organised method of teaching the blind was adopted.

And again it was a Frenchman who brought the matter to the forefront. Valentin Haüy, in 1771, saw a group of blind men grotesquely attired, with spectacles on their noses, giving a burlesque concert, and greeted with merriment and derision by the crowd. He left the scene in sorrow, and from that day determined to work for the blind. First he acquainted himself with all the methods which had hitherto been in use for instructing them, and then started to teach a poor blind boy whom he found begging in a church porch. We are told that one day this lad found a card on which some printing had made deep impressions. Feeling his way with his fingers, Lesueur read out the words to M. Haüy, who thus conceived the idea of embossed printing on paper for the blind. He collected other blind pupils, and in 1785 founded in Paris the first blind asylum and school, the *Institution Nationale des Jeunes Aveugles*. His methods became known, and he received an invitation to exhibit his pupils before Louis XVI. and his Court at Versailles. Later the School fell on evil days and would have ceased to exist had it not come under the protection of the State. Mr. Illingworth says: "The name of this renowned Frenchman should be written

up in letters of gold in every institution for the blind in the world."

In 1791, shortly after Haüy undertook his work for the blind in France, Edward Rushton, who was blind, originated the first school for the blind in England, viz., the School for the Indigent Blind in Liverpool. This was quickly followed by the Royal Blind Asylum in Edinburgh, and the Blind School at Bristol, both established in 1793, and in 1799 by the School at St. George's-in-the-Fields, London, which afterwards became the Leatherhead Institution for the Blind. In 1805 came the Norwich Asylum and School, followed in 1810 by the Richmond Asylum in Dublin, the Aberdeen Asylum (1812), the Molyneux Asylum in Dublin (1815) and the Glasgow Asylum and School (1827.) The Belfast School was founded in 1831 and therefore does not come within the province of this article. At the beginning of the 19th century, institutions for the blind were established in various parts of Europe. The Institution at Vienna was founded in 1804 by Dr. W. Klein, a blind man, who remained at its head for fifty years. Between 1806 and 1811 institutions were founded at Amsterdam, Prague, Dresden and Copenhagen. The first school for the blind in the United States was founded in Boston, chiefly through the efforts of Dr. John D. Fisher, a young physician who had visited the French school. It was incorporated in 1829, and in honour of Colonel Perkins, who gave his mansion to the Institution, it was named the Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum (now School) for the Blind.

The question of type has been one which has exercised the minds of workers for the blind for many years. That used by Haüy was a kind of italics which was generally used in institutions for the blind until, in 1831, James Gall of Edinburgh introduced his angular Roman type. Dr. Fry's alphabet consisted of the ordinary capital letters denuded of their small strokes. Both Frere and Moon, in their types, adopted the return line principle. Frere reversed his characters in the return line, not so Moon. The Boston character is still used in some American schools, also the Philadelphian which is almost identical with Allston's type. Lucas's type, which was introduced in 1838, was popular for a considerable time. Others attempted different systems, and a battle which has been alluded to as the "Battle of Types" was waged for many years.

In celebrating the centenary of Louis Braille it must not be forgotten that the dot system had already been evolved by one Barbier. The principle was the same as that of Braille, there being twelve dots instead of six. This combination was too long to be covered by the finger in reading, and it remained for Louis Braille to reduce the number of dots and to perfect the system. It is because he gave it to the world in 1829 that we have chosen 1830 as the culminating date of what may be called anticipatory work, for Braille is the recognised medium of the blind world to-day. E. G.



OBITUARY

Dr. C. W. PEARCE

IT is with much regret that we record the death of a member of the National Institute's Special Music Consultative Committee, Dr. Charles William Pearce, M.A., Mus.Doc., F.R.C.O., A.T.C.L., after a sudden illness necessitating an operation. A Memorial Service was held on Friday, December 7th, at St. Clement's Church, King William Street, at noon, at which the National Institute was represented, and a letter expressing the sympathy of the Council was sent to the widow.

The Music Catalogue of the National Institute is enriched by a number of invaluable text-books on the Theory of Music from Dr. Pearce's pen, which have been of infinite service to blind students. Several of his compositions are also included in the catalogue. It gave Dr. Pearce peculiar gratification to know, shortly before his death, that his text-books had been of so much help to blind music students.

Dr. Pearce was born at Salisbury in 1856, and was for many years Warden of Trinity College of Music, London, Professor of Harmony at the Guildhall School of Music and Examiner for Musical Degrees in the University of Cambridge. He was recognised as one of the leading educationalists of his day in everything relating to music, and his place on the N.I.B. Music Consultative Committee will be difficult to fill.



A successful entertainment was given last month at the Royal School for the Blind, Westbury-on-Trym, when a performance of an operetta, "The Lord of the Isles," was given by the pupils. The proceeds go to assist the School funds for providing Braille literature and games.

GREATER LONDON FUND FOR THE BLIND

THE Hallowe'en Revel continued gaily into the early hours of the 1st of November. The members of the Committee and other friends of the blind, too numerous to mention, brought parties, and the Lady of Hallowe'en herself (Miss Evelyn Laye) in hoop and farthingale, escorted by her elegant beau (Mr. Bertram Wallis) arrived with a train of present-day "Stars" as her guests. Mr. Jack Buchanan was mobbed by admirers after making the lucky draw, when he was assisted by Miss Emma Haig, who caused much amusement by munching the Hallowe'en apple. Miss Haig and her husband, Mr. Art Fowler, were in the party of that steady friend of the blind, Mrs. W. H. Dawes. Miss Josephine Bradley and Mr. Wellesley-Smith came at considerable inconvenience to dance and demonstrate; the judges of the fancy dress included as last year the Mayor and Mayoress of Hammersmith and Mr. Hassall, who were re-inforced by Mr. George Belcher and Mr. G. E. Studdy. Dancers of the Thorne Academy presented the Legend of Hallowe'en, and Miss Joy Goldsmith contributed earlier in the evening a dance solo. Many sought to know their future from the four clairvoyantes who were kind enough to give their services, and Mrs. Rigg-Howard's band of sellers collected a substantial sum for this and by the sale of buttonholes.

The evening of November 1st saw another successful concert organised by the H.O.B., Camberwell; Harringay Constitutional Club was revisited on the 6th, Highbury Constitutional Club on the 15th, Walshe House Club, Clapham on the 17th, and Grays Baptist Young People's Guild on the 20th. On the 23rd, Southlands School, Harrow, arranged a concert, when the blind carol singers appeared for the first time this season.

Ruislip H.O.B. chose as their winter events a Bridge Drive and Whist Drive; both were as successful as usual when organised by this enthusiastic band of workers.

Another outstanding event of the month was the Whist Drive organised by Mrs. Rigg-Howard, with the co-operation of the St. Matthew's, West Kensington, Men's Club, and particularly of Mr. Evans and Mr. Welchman. This produced no less than £21 and there was not a vacant seat; socially, it was so enjoyable that the event is to be made an annual one for the benefit of the Fund.

Mrs. Rigg-Howard has for many years been a good friend to the blind, and has been induced to add to her responsibility the joint Honorary Secretaryship of the Kensington Helpers of the Blind, together with Miss Evelyn Newbolt. In this capacity, she found the programme sellers and collectors for the Afternoon of Plays and Dances, arranged by the London Theatre School. This took place on the 14th at the Century Theatre, when a delightfully varied programme was presented by Miss Irene Hentschel and Miss Janet Duff. The appeal was made by Miss Athene Seyler, who spoke movingly and sympathetically of the courage and talent of the sightless.

On the 26th another matinée performance was held at the Arts Theatre Club, when the Chaplin trio supported Miss Eva Saunderson. Miss Saunderson's performance is unique, as she personally portrays each part in the play selected, which in this instance was "The Skin Game." Mr. Galsworthy had shown his interest by sending a delightful message to the blind to be auctioned by Mr. J. T. Grein—a staunch admirer of Miss Saunderson—who made the appeal for funds.

The annual collection at Kingston Empire brought in a sum of £22 11s. 5d.

Mr. Preece was the speaker at a number of these functions; he also addressed the Elliot Masonic Lodge and members of the Bloomsbury Institute, before whom he delivered his lecture "Through Blind Eyes."



HENRY STAINSBY MEMORIAL GIFT FUND FOR THE BLIND

THE attention of Superintendents, Head Teachers and others is directed to the above Fund which was inaugurated to perpetuate the memory of the late Mr. Henry Stainsby. The object of the Fund is to assist blind pupils on the completion of their training at recognised Schools, Institutions or Colleges for the Blind by presenting them with useful gifts in the form of Braille typewriters, watches, or other apparatus or books. Gifts must be of such a nature as not to relieve any Authority of its proper obligations. Each gift bears a suitable inscription.

Forms of application may be obtained from the Secretary-General, National Institute for the Blind, 224-6-8, Great Portland Street, London, W. 1.

NATIONAL PIANO PLAYING COMPETITION, 1928

Organized by the "Daily Express"



It is gratifying to be able to report that in this, by far the greatest contest of its kind ever organized in this country, ten blind competitors have achieved distinction, thereby demonstrating in the most public manner that, given anything like an equal chance, the blind musician can hold his own with the seeing.

There were 20,000 entrants (arranged in four Grades according to age), from all over the British Isles, and one blind candidate emerged second in the highest Grade ("A"), at the final contest held in London on December 1st, before a Board of eleven adjudicators, all musicians of the highest eminence.

Before dealing with the successes in seriatim, the nature of the tests should be explained.

There were four Examinations:—Preliminary—Area—Semi-final—Final, and 72 pianos by standard English makers (including six "Grands"), were offered as prizes, together with diplomas and certificates of merit.

Preliminary examinations, for all entrants, were conducted in 250 selected towns throughout the land. Survivors were then required to attend special contests which were held in 18 metropolitan and provincial areas. The 72 winners of these Area Contests (four in each of the 18 Areas, Grades, A., B., C., D.), were further tested in London at Semi-final examinations, whereby the competitors were reduced to 16 (four to each Grade). These Semi-finalists were summoned to a Final Contest at the Kingsway Hall, London, on December 1st, and were judged by the Special Board already referred to, consisting of professors at the R.A.M., R.C.M. and other Institutions. It was at this Final contest that *Alec Templeton* (aged 18), attained the second position* in Grade "A." He is an ex-Worcester College boy. His prize was a Brinsmead "Grand" Piano, and he also gained one of the two Special Diplomas awarded to the two best competitors in each of the four Grades.

In the "Area" Examinations: *David S. Williams*, F.R.C.O., L.R.A.M. (Age 19), an ex-R.N.C. student, gained top marks—Grade

"A"—in the Cardiff (or South Wales) Area. He was awarded a Diploma, and a fine "Upright" Piano. Incidentally, Williams carried off the "Lafontaine" prize at the R.C.O. in January last, by securing the highest marks for the "Fellowship" of that College.

In the Home Counties (South) Area, *Samuel Kerry*, F.R.C.O., L.R.A.M. (Age 23), an ex-R.N.C. student, was *proxime accessit* in Grade "A," with 88% marks, thereby gaining a special certificate. The *Daily Express* of November 21st singled out this examinee for special mention in its columns. He is organist of the Presbyterian Church, Wallington, Surrey.

Donald W. Sparrow, F.R.C.O., A.R.C.M., qualified for the Birmingham Area Contest.

This candidate (an ex-student of Birmingham School), was amongst four in this Area who, in order to enable the judges to decide who should be selected to compete in the London finals, were asked to play again.

Reginald Black, another Birmingham School Student, also qualified for the Birmingham Area Contest.

David Buchan, of Sutton (ex-R.N.C. student), qualified for Home Counties (South) Area.

William Black (ex-student of Edinburgh School), qualified for the Edinburgh Area Contest.

Miss Hilda Annie Sage, L.R.A.M. (ex-R.N.C.), now resident in Coventry, qualified for the Birmingham Area Contest in Grade "A."

Miss Nora Brady, of St. Mary's Institution for the Female Blind, Merion, was the "runner up" in the Dublin Area Contest, Grade "B." (her age—16 years—placing her in this grade). She was one mark below the Area Winner.

Miss Hilda Lockwood, student at the Yorkshire School for the Blind gained a Certificate of Merit in Grade "C" (ages 12 to 14).

Each of these seven last-named received a certificate awarded to those who displayed Special Merit in any of the Sectional Examinations.

The success of these blind candidates seems the more remarkable when it is borne in mind that they had necessarily to wait till the beginning of August before the "Braille" copies of the Test pieces (available in inkprint

*The winner was a student from the Royal College of Music, Mr. Cecil J. Smith, age 19.

to the sighted early in July) could be supplied to them.

In this connection the fine and extraordinarily rapid work of the sighted and blind transcribers of the N.I.B. should be recorded. Seventeen working days after the N.I.B. had obtained permission to "Braille" the ten Test pieces (some were very difficult), the whole issue was finished and on sale, an achievement without parallel, especially as it was accomplished by a holiday depleted staff. Mr. P. T. Mayhew, the blind superintendent of the transcription work at the N.I.B., and his sighted assistant, Miss Violet Tanner, are specially to be commended for their brilliant work.

The fact that there are no winners in the three lower or juvenile Grades may be accounted for thus :—

- (1) Children learning music in Schools for the Blind must, of course, keep to the time-tables as regards practice, which usually allow only 30 to 60 minutes per day; whereas many sighted children, living at home, have no limit set upon their practice.
- (2) Sighted children had also a three weeks' start with their copies, an advantage which left the children residing in a Blind School hopelessly handicapped, and the holidays in Blind Schools (August and September) interfered with their regular music lessons for two very vital months.
- (3) Many sighted children were "coached" by specialists for this particular contest; whereas the blind child had to be satisfied with the ordinary tuition provided by his or her School.

The effect of these successes should be to lift the Blind Musician to a much higher level in public esteem than formerly, especially as the Chairman of the London Board of Adjudicators, Dr. Markham Lee, publicly stated that the Grade "A" contest between the four finalists had been "a very close one indeed."

Six hundred "Braille" copies of the Test pieces were sold, and we gather from a *Daily Express* Announcement that there were some 200 blind entrants, i.e., 1% of the 20,000 total.

A sketch of Alec Templeton's career will be found on another page of this issue.

EDWARD WATSON.

THE BLIND OF JAPAN

By T. YOSHIMOTO.

TWENTY years ago at the Conference on the Blind held in Manchester in 1908, I had the pleasure of reading a paper on the Blind of Japan which ended as follows:—

"Lastly, we shall have to pay great attention to their spiritual education, for the blind are often in unfortunate and trying surroundings, and are apt to be depressed, or in despair. Good education can make up for the loss of sight to the blind, and suitable work can make them forget it, but nothing can compensate for the loss of sight so well as spiritual light—not to mention the eternal benefit it will give them. May the Japanese who helped the blind so well in the past help them well in the future too, and add the beautiful light of real civilization to the Rising Sun, to illumine the darkness of the blind world in the East, and return their sincerest gratitude to their Western friends."

During the twenty years which have elapsed since then Christianity has steadily uplifted and blessed the Blind of Japan as nothing else could have done. Mr. Isoh Yamagata in writing about the blind not long ago said:—"In fact a great many blind men and women in Japan are now Christians. A few years ago a gathering of about one hundred leading blind people was held in Tokyo, when it was found that at least forty of them were believers. It is very doubtful that a meeting, except of course that of Christians, was ever held in this country which had such a high percentage of believers among its attendants." The percentage is now much higher.

Some years ago a Society was started in Tokyo which chose the name of "The Guild of those who believe in Christ," so that they should quite definitely show their Foundation principles. This Society now possesses the best Braille Printing Press in Japan, and this has just been removed to their larger new building to which our Royal House previously contributed part of the building materials. This Press has produced the whole of the Bible in Japanese Braille and has now published in Braille practically the whole of the best Japanese Christian literature. After the great earthquake and other lesser ones since then, these people have always been the first to succour the blind who were in distress. It is chiefly due to the work of this Society that by the grace of God there are now so many blind Christians in Japan.

For much of the progress of the work amongst the Blind in Japan, sincere thanks are due to the National Institute for the Blind, the Royal Normal College for the Blind and many other bodies for their great example, and for their kind and enthusiastic willingness to assist the Blind of Japan. Heartfelt thanks are also due to the Braille Department of the S.P.C.K. and the Braille Missionary Union for their great kindness in brailling special Christian books for them.

In a letter recently received from Mr. Millar, the British and Foreign Bible Society's Secretary in Korea, he says :—"I talked over the work for the blind in Seoul with the Rev. C. M. Cha, the Pastor of the Saimunan Presbyterian Church, one of the largest churches in the city. He became interested, and discussed the work with his session. The session agreed to undertake the work and employed two men for the purpose, who report on what they have done. The advantages of attempting the work in this way are that a leading pastor and session are responsible for the work being faithfully done; their interest and prayers are invoked and through them we obtain the interest and prayers of the church.

Since July 15th, 60 blind people have been called upon and preached to, but only five of them have shown any inclination 'to do the doctrine.' The visitors found that the main objection raised by the blind was usually that if they became Christians they could not continue to be sorcerers, the means of earning their livelihood would be gone and there would be nothing else for them to do. The women of their homes are even more opposed to Christianity, and for the same reason. These men are helpless in making a livelihood outside their present occupation. There are no trades into which they can enter, and the possibility of making an ordinary living in a respectable business is indeed slight. One of the most encouraging cases at the present time is of a man who learned massage in the government school for the blind, and because of his profession is able to consider Christianity seriously. He is now attending church.

Work among blind women is more hopeful, but it, also, has its difficulties, for many of the women are sorceresses.

I am afraid the above is only too true of the blind all over Asia and Africa, and indeed further, and many are worse off than in Korea.

The British Blind Persons Act, 1920, is a great example to the Blind World in general,

though, even more than the actual material benefits, the spirit in which these are now being administered by the officials and put into practice by the various Societies and voluntary workers, is the real inspiration, not to mention what the blind themselves have done so splendidly. It is an inspiration to all and is sure to uplift the blind of the whole world.

For those countries where, unfortunately, the condition of the blind is most backward, the way of Father Jackson of Burma is indeed a wonderful example, because it is necessary to plant the right seed before you can expect real fruit. This is exactly what the B.F.B.S. is doing for the blind of these countries, by supplying them with the Bible or Bible parts in Braille in their own languages. The Braille Missionary Union is doing its best to supply good Christian literature in Braille in many countries. All such efforts to serve the blind of other countries will at the same time greatly help the blind of this country if they themselves take part in it, as the blind can do so much for one another. *It is far more blessed to give than to receive.*

There is so much yet to be done for them both spiritually and materially; a very thorough study of their conditions is urgently needed and infinite patience and sympathy with their backward ways, before we can hope to see any results. The task would indeed seem hopeless, but for our faith in God and in the prayers of many in more favoured and privileged conditions. This will lead to the active service of love, which necessarily follows all real prayer for others.



A POLISH BLIND INSTITUTION

WE learn from the *Catholic Herald* that social services provided by the Church in Poland include the training and care of the blind. The Catholic Institute for the Care of the Blind, a large institution at Laski, near Warsaw, which has developed during a brief six years of existence into an important organisation, has announced an expansion programme which will include the building of a new hospital and additional housing facilities to accommodate more than 1,000 sightless people. The Institute recently opened a new headquarters office in Warsaw.

Having recently established a colony for the blind, the organisation boards, clothes,

lodges, and teaches more than a hundred blind persons while providing relief for many others. When the new expansion programme is complete, the colony will house more than 1,000 persons, drawing its members from all parts of Poland. A church accommodating 300 persons and a community centre have been erected.

In addition to its own library of Braille written books, the Institute has a special printing machine which was donated by the American Braille Press, and publishes school books and other reading material for the members of the colony.

A comprehensive study of the problem of blindness has been set on foot, and an appeal has been issued to all institutions and persons interested in the blind, particularly from the pedagogical and legal points of view, to send information to the headquarters here. This remarkable expansion over a period of only six years, officials of the Institute point out, has been aided in large measure by contributions from institutions and persons abroad. Recent contributions from America enabled the colony to purchase live stock for its plant. The ground which the buildings occupy was donated to the Institute at the outset of its existence. Additional ground was purchased later for an orchard and vegetable garden to aid in making the colony self-sustaining. Up to the present, however, the colony is maintained principally by public contributions and the services of Sisters and volunteer workers, only five per cent. of the expenditure being provided by Government subsidy. One of the buildings is set apart as a home for workers, and houses the kitchen and laundry. Sisters are carrying on tailor and seamstress work, nursing and teaching, and working in the fields and garden.

The colony possesses an elementary school, a seven-class school, a finishing course for the elder blind, workshops for the young, and workshops for the teaching of basket and brushmaking, bookmaking, woollen work, cording work, and sewing and household work. A new building containing forty-five rooms has just been built, but lacks furnishings and equipment.

The Warsaw branch provides relief for families of the blind in the city, distributing clothing and tickets for food, and affording medical and legal advice, and books and instruction.

In addition to the new hospital it is planned to build a children's home to house fifty

children at a cost of £4,000, a home and school for 100 girls costing £8,000, a home for women and another for men, each costing £8,000, and a home for fifty elderly women and another for elderly men, each costing £4,000. The estimated cost of the hospital building is £16,000.

The urgent need of institutions to care for the blind is indicated by the fact that there are 30,000 persons so afflicted in Poland. Of these 6,000 are children of school age. Besides the Institute for the Care of the Blind there are three other similar organisations. All these institutions take care of 500 persons. But for the rest there is neither care, nor help, nor teaching.



BLINDNESS IN SIND

THE annual report of the Thar Parkar (Sind) branch of the Blind Relief Association for 1927-28 suggests that the census reports relating to blindness in India under-estimate considerably the incidence of this disability. It is recalled that the census figures for India and for the Bombay Presidency give the incidence of the total blindness as 14 per 10,000 of the population; generally, the report states, the figures are two or three times too low. In a count by an official in the United Provinces over 90 totally blind per 10,000 were found, and in the part of Sind from which the report emanates the figure is at least 40 per 10,000. The association seeks to overcome the difficulties created by ignorance, apathy, and lack of medical facilities which prevent the treatment of many cases of blindness susceptible to curative surgical measures; it also undertakes preventive work. In this task the main problem has been to obtain capable and suitable medical officers for touring work in the districts. There appears to have been a substantial reduction in the number of cases requiring operation in the area in which the association has been carrying on its campaign during the past three years, and it has therefore been possible to extend its activities to cover the greater part of Eastern Sind. Mr. Sachanand, the association's medical officer, dealt with about 10,000 cases, including over 2,000 in which major operations were performed, at camps in various districts. In Upper Sind, at Shirkapur, Dr. Holland of Quetta spent some six or seven weeks in work among the blind with the assistance of surgeons from Europe and America.

HOME OCCUPATIONS FOR THE BLIND

BASKETS IN PALEMBANG CANE (I)

PALEMBANG, a port in Java, gives its name to one of the smallest species of the rattan or cane palm, as it is from this port that the cane called Palembang is mainly shipped. Ranging from 3mm. to 8mm. in diameter, it is usually of a red brown colour and slightly ribbed; and, if a good quality Palembang is used, is pliable and pleasant to work and looks well in the finished article,

besides being much stronger than either willow or pulp cane and cheaper than the latter. Palembang cane is sold as "washed" and "unwashed" the former costing from 1/- to

1/6 per lb. and the latter about 9d. A lower price per lb. obtains, of course, if quantities of 14 lbs. and over are bought at one time. Washed cane is taken up country to streams where it is allowed to remain in running water and rubbed length by length with coconut fibre, after which it is laid on trestles

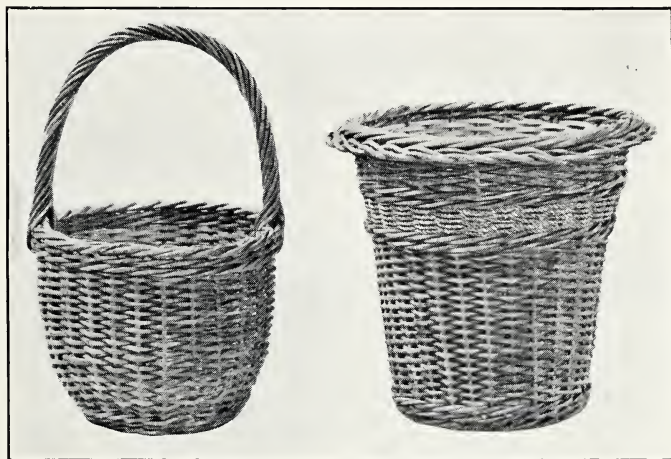
to dry, this last operation being of short duration in that equatorial land of perpetual summer.

Washed Palembang is recommended, not altogether because of its cleanness, but because only the smallest and best is washed, unwashed Palembang including several varieties of rattan of poor working quality and colour, and in size up to 8mm. which is too large for the work we propose to attempt. This question of size is an important one, for Palembang is not sorted into exact sizes as is pulp cane, and difficulty is often experienced in getting the due proportion of small required for randing, bottoming, etc. From 3mm. to 5mm. is the best for light basket work and this can be obtained from firms such as Messrs. Jacobs,

Young & Co., Ltd., 265, Borough High Street, London, S.E.1; John J. Plater & Sons, 262, Bradford Street, Birmingham; F. Westbury & Son, Ltd., 199a, Borough High Street, London, S.E.1; Fred Aldous, 21, Marsden Square, Market Street, Manchester; Country Industries, Ltd., 26, Eccleston Street, London, S.W.1; and the Dryad Handicrafts, 42, St. Nicholas Street, Leicester.

Palembang cane is not as easy to work as pulp cane, and the beginner should not attempt its use until some experience has been gained in the working of pulp cane; and not then unless the fingers are fairly strong. No difficulty will be experienced by one used to willow

work, for the worker who can manipulate willow can manipulate any material used in basketry. An important point that makes for easy working is to select the largest canes for bottom stick and stakes, and the smallest for randing. Intermediate sizes will be used for bottoming, upsetting, and waling, and for splitting.



TWO SAMPLES OF BASKETRY.

To prepare Palembang cane for working, it should remain in water several hours and then be left under a damp cloth to mellow for an hour or two more. A good plan is to soak the cane all day, and let it remain under the damp cloth through the night; it will then be in prime condition for work the following morning. It does not dry so quickly as pulp cane, but the prepared material not actually in use should be kept covered.

The tools are those used for pulp cane work, and comprise round-nosed pliers, spring shears, small bodkin, knife, bradawl, small beating iron, rule, and, if rectangular baskets are to be made, a small screw block. In common with practically all other kinds of basket work, Palembang cane baskets are best made on a

sloping workboard, either resting on the knees with the other end on the floor, or used on a bench or table with the end nearer the worker raised some four or five inches by a transverse piece of wood screwed on at right angles.

Wooden bases as supplied for pulp cane work are useless for palembang work as the holes are too small; but bases specially bored with larger holes to take palembang stakes can be had from the Dryad Handicrafts, who also publish a booklet "Brown Cane Baskets" at 1/6, by post 1/8. In the case of larger palembang baskets such as dog baskets, wooden bottoms render the work much easier as well as stronger and more level. In the case of smaller baskets such as shopping and wastepaper baskets, it is suggested that the use of cane bottoms is far more craftsmanlike as well as being less expensive.

A SHOPPING BASKET. — Having watered the material and allowed it to remain under the damp cloth till mellow, it is a good plan to take a leaf from the book of the professional basket maker and "cut out" in one operation all the material required for the particular job in hand. About a pound of the three to five millimetre cane will be sufficient for the shopping basket, and, with this on his left-hand side, the worker proceeds to take each length as it comes and deal with it in one or other of the following ways, thus avoiding the time-wasting and patience-trying process of picking over the bundle time after time to find a length suited for a given purpose. The thinnest canes will be placed together for randing, the middle-sized ones for upsetting, waling, and covering the handle, and the stoutest ones for bottom sticks and stakes. Having sorted the material into three sizes, tie up the bundle of smallest canes, cut the bottom sticks and stakes from the largest sized canes, and, after taking from the middle-sized stuff sufficient for upsetting, etc., the remainder can be split for use as siding or for wrapped handles. For the shopping basket seven bottom sticks, each seven inches long, and twenty-seven stakes, each fifteen inches long will be needed. Slope or point one end of each stake and tie the whole together, placing them under the damp cloth till required.

A. G. K.

(To be continued.)

THE BLIND IN EGYPT

CERTAIN interesting facts pertaining to the blind community of Egypt are contained in the 1927 Report of Zeitoun, the Institution for the Blind in Cairo, from which we learn that the blind population comprises approximately 155,500. The Institution was founded in 1901 by the late Mrs. T. R. Armitage, and is maintained by subscriptions from private donors in England with a subsidy from the Egyptian Government. Boys from every religion are received into the School and instructed in reading, writing and Arabic Grammar and arithmetic. They are also trained in chair-caning, basket-making, carpet-weaving and the printing and binding of Arabic Braille books. During the year under review approximately 50 pupils were resident in the Institution. Zeitoun has also inaugurated and developed its own printing establishment from which books are supplied to a second institution founded and supported by the State. Three blind instructors, who qualified at Zeitoun, are now employed as such in the State and Coptic Institutions, and others are in process of training. It is hoped that these will be absorbed into the new schools which it is anticipated will be opened in the near future. During 1926, as the result of a large donation, the Zeitoun Institution decided to annex and assume control of an eye clinic through which it is hoped to combat the evil of trachoma in the land of its origin.

Within the last few months the first school for the blind in Asiatic Turkey has been opened in Smyrna in conjunction with the school already in existence for the deaf and dumb. Statistics reveal the alarming figure of approximately 50,000 blind persons in Turkey for whom nothing has previously been attempted to alleviate their hardship and misery. The pupils of the new school demonstrate a marked aptitude for modern music and typewriting.



The 30th anniversary of the formation of the Edinburgh Club for Reading to the Blind was celebrated on the 17th December. Mr. John Elder, the President and Secretary, spoke of the pleasure which the readers derived in taking their regular turn of reading aloud. An enjoyable musical programme was rendered, the evening's entertainment being most successful.

HOW THE BABY THINKS



BABIES cannot really see until they are three weeks old, and after that a new life opens up for them.

Some interesting observations on this subject of sight are made by Dr. Park Lewis, Vice-president of the American National Society for the Prevention of Blindness.

"The infant coming into the world," says Dr. Lewis, "requires for certain functions months, and for others even years before they are prepared for their proper uses.

"The new-born child is simply a bundle of potentialities. Millions of nerve-cells must be activated before they are prepared to carry the light impulses back to the brain centres to be interpreted into visual terms. The eyes of all white babies at birth are blue. They have not yet become deeply pigmented as many of them will at a later date.

"The eyeballs move vaguely at first, and during the early days they look almost blindly around them. They are unseeing eyes. Until there is answering intelligence within, the image of the object before the child conveys nothing to him.

"A lamp held before the face of the child will, in the course of a week or so, be followed by the eyes waveringly and indefinitely. It probably appears to the infant, whose intelligence has not yet become awakened, as a mere blotch of orange colour.

"Gradually as the weeks go on the more definite and brilliant objects as they are presented before the baby begin to excite, feebly at first, a sense of interest and curiosity. They appear very faint at first, but gradually increase, and with the increase comes a rapid gain in the perceptive faculties. Through the eyes a pathway is being made to the mind.

"If, after intelligence has become somewhat aroused, in place of the lamp an orange is held before the child's eyes, the blur which was at first that of the yellow light begins to take on form, and the little undeveloped being begins to note that the object is round and that it has a striking colour.

"Later the baby fingers touch it, and another series of sense impressions are awakened. The orange drops to the floor with a dull thud, and the auditory centres respond. Later the sound will be recognised,

not as that of broken glass, nor of a falling book. It is the sound peculiar to the falling fruit and to nothing else.

"Then the skin is broken, and the fragrance reaches the nerve endings within the nose. The sense of smell is being stimulated. A new memory impression has been given, adding to the multitude that are now pouring in on the baby's readily responsive senses. Then the juice of the fruit is put on the infant's tongue, and a complex of all of those qualities that go to make up the orange—those of light, of hearing, of smell, of touch, and of taste—have been so impressed on his memory centres that they will never be eradicated while each nerve fibre can carry its message.

"At last the baby reaches round the orange, and he will have made a great discovery—he has learned of the existence of depth. He is not living in a flat world, but one of three dimensional spaces, and in learning this he has made an immense stride in the newly-acquired knowledge to which he is now rapidly adding every hour.

"The way in which sight is developed," says the doctor, "is of great importance, because in its functioning, not alone during babyhood, but as well during adolescence and middle life (even in old age), many changes in essential structures may be effected. In order that this may be better understood let us briefly consider how the eyes work that we may see.

"It may seem a little startling to those who have not thought of it that we do not see with our eyes; we see with our minds. The eyes are so constructed that they convey light impressions by way of the optic nerves to the back portion of the brain. There they make an impression on the nerve-cells very much like that on the ground glass of a camera.

"When this impression is carried back to the brain it will have no meaning until it shall have been interpreted by another part of the brain. So in a perfectly normal condition we may have 'eyes which see not.' We may look in the face of a friend and be thinking of something else and it will make no impression on us. It will be, indeed, as though he were not there. Only when by an effort of the mind we 'fix' the impression, and through an act of memory relate it to the person whom we see, does the image in our eyes have any meaning for us.

"As we walk through the streets the images of the objects that pass before our eyes make a series of moving pictures, but for the most part they are ignored, and make no impression on us. We give no thought to them. The importance of this is very great from an educational viewpoint. So much of our visual training is unassociated with mental activity as to make it unproductive.

"There are certain conditions in which injuries within the brain, such as hæmorrhages, may so interfere with the connection between the seeing part and the memory centres that an object previously familiar may be clearly seen, but will have lost its meaning. People in that way sometimes lose the faculty of reading, although the type may be clearly seen, the intelligence unimpaired, and the ability to write unaffected."



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* Stereotyped Books.

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THE MEANING OF CHARITY



ANY words are from time to time misused. In most cases, fortunately, no great harm is done, but there are cases in which the constant misuse of a word has definitely tarnished it and destroyed its significance.

Consider the word "charitable" as applied to an institution. To many people, the two words suggest something quite unpleasant, something in a crude uniform, something pompous and pretentious, something dealing in a dictatorial way with inferiorities and accordingly accentuating the snobbery of social grades.

Yet how radically untrue are such impressions! What is charity? According to the dictionary, it is "the disposition to think favourably of others and to do them good." And according to St. Paul, it is the greatest of Christian virtues. Yet we find its adjective, when applied to an institution—"a society established for some purpose"—suggesting to many men and women a disagreeable mixture of Bumbledom and Pharisaical self-righteousness.

We will not enquire into the cause of such a grave misapprehension, because it is dying. It has had its legitimate foundations, but they have mostly been destroyed. Those, therefore, who still insist on the uncharitableness of charity, have built an opinion on a sandy basis which we hope a healthy storm will soon completely destroy.

So let there be no mistake. Universal charity is universal love, and love is the keynote of all that makes this life worth living.

The recipients of charity are often as great sinners in misunderstanding as the givers of charity. Both see facts through cobwebs of their own spinning—the web of false pride in both cases, but one spun by those who are too proud to admit a favour they receive and the other spun by those whose actions are inspired by self-esteem and not by love.

True charity can only emanate from mutual understanding. The object of charity must recognize the need of understanding, and the giver of charity must provide such understanding. Both are rewarded, because charity interacts and is as benign to the giver as to the receiver. Accordingly, the object of charity, by responding to it is giving perhaps something even more precious than he has received to the provider of charity.

We are led to these general remarks by a consideration of the present position of voluntary work for the blind in this country. Personally, we think such work is in an entirely healthy condition, but we are fully aware that there are people amongst those who need help and those who are requested to help who consider that the blind should not be dependent in any way on charity.

Without hesitation, we say that such an idea is fundamentally wrong. Acts of Parliament are very necessary and occasionally are inspired by genuine humanity, but to imagine that an Act of Parliament can ever take the

place of that sympathy for the handicapped which is either living or dormant in every soul is as foolish as to imagine that individual emotions and affections can be regulated by a Board of Scientists. And if a voluntary service is translated, by force of law, into a commanded service, there is great danger that the real value of such service, both to the served and the server, will be completely destroyed.

Most of our readers know that, during the last fifty years, the blind have progressed by leaps and bounds—out of all proportion, in fact, to the progress, if any, of the last thousand years. Practically all this progress can be written down to the credit of true charity—to the interaction of sincere sympathy and right understanding, ably applied and ably received.

A thousand years ago the blind were objects of pity—and they were neglected. Yesterday, the blind were objects of sympathy—and they were helped. To-day, many of the blind are objects of admiration—and they are helped with greater zest and greater effort.

Lack of eyesight is a definite physical defect. It must, somehow or other, be overcome. Its hardships can be lessened by gifts given in pity—but is that overcoming? Its urgent needs can be relieved by doles—but is that overcoming? It can be placed on a legal status as a deficiency worth so much—but is that overcoming? Blindness can only be overcome by the combined effort of blind individuals and individuals with sight who sit down together and worry out the problems of "What do I need?" and "How can I help?"

They have done so during the last fifty years with results that are known to the whole world. To-day, the blind have books, periodicals, music, apparatus, special means of education and employment, facilities for amusement and social amenities—all because blind and sighted have met in "charity"—each side "with the disposition to think favourably of others and do them good." The blind have benefited enormously from the generosity of the general public, but have not the general public likewise benefited? In a thousand ways, the blind have substantiated yearning ideals of hope in face of despair, courage in face of misfortune, perseverance in face of set-backs, and have provided striving humanity with a medicine cheaply purchased.

We know from experience that an average person with sight is inspired to give all he

can when brought into actual contact with the achievements of the blind. A man may have no knowledge of what the blind can do: give him some information, and he will be interested; give him more, and he will be astonished; pile achievement on achievement, and he will be enthusiastic, so that eventually the cord of charity which holds together two men who, in different spheres are trying to make the best of life, will have every strand adjusted and perfected in durable strength.

Such bonds are unbroken now, and are unbreakable in the future. They are knots of friendship, ties of understanding and mutual respect, and while there are men and women who need help and men and women who wish to help, they will endure—not by the law of man but by Divine Law. THE EDITOR.



BEDFORDSHIRE EISTEDDFOD

In connection with the Bedfordshire Eisteddfod
COMPETITIVE MUSICAL FESTIVAL
to be held at the Corn Exchange, Bedford,
from March 4th to March 16th.

THE Prose Reading (for blind readers),
which will be held on March 12th, is
open to the United Kingdom.

We quote as follows from the Syllabus :—
CLASS 154 :

Prose Reading (for blind readers),

Open to United Kingdom.

Competitors will be required to read a prose
passage in Braille, selected by a competent
authority.

Entrance Fee 1s. 6d.

PRIZES :

1st, Gold Medal and Certificate,

2nd, Gold Centre Medal and Certificate,

3rd, Silver Medal and Certificate.

Entry forms may be obtained from the
Secretary, Bedfordshire Eisteddfod, 19,
St. Peter's Street, Bedford.

Entries close on February 12th, 1929.

(The L.M.S. Railway are issuing 1st and
3rd Class return tickets to Bedford at a single
fare for the double journey within a radius of
60 miles to anyone attending the festival on
surrendering, at the Railway Booking Office,
the perforated portion of admission ticket or
voucher. These will be available on the day
of issue only.)

The National Omnibus Company are issuing
return tickets to Bedford at a single fare for
the double journey to anyone attending the
festival, on the above-mentioned terms.)

PERSONALITIES

IN THE WORLD OF THE BLIND

PHYLLIS MONK

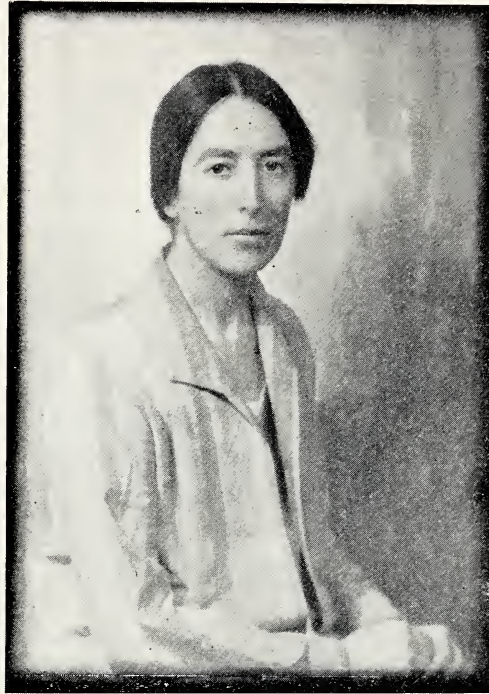


HERE are places that should be viewed from a particular standpoint. Canterbury from the hillside, Salisbury from the river, and Blackheath from the top of a bus. You get, as you ride up the hill to the Heath, such a breath of air and glimpse of wide playing fields, such a stretch of sky, that you

imagine you are about to arrive by the sea-side. The career outlined in these pages began here; for one cannot be said to have a career before one is four, and it was when the subject of this biography was four years old that her name went down for the first time upon a Kindergarten School Register in Blackheath; Phyllis Monk—no trimmings here, brief and direct. This was in 1889. Paul Krüger and Cecil Rhodes were at their dreams, the goldfields were calling the town of Johannesburg into being, but Phyllis Monk was going to and from the Kindergarten back to the beloved company of innumerable dolls, the friendship of parents, and the oversight, whether hers or theirs, of two older brothers. By-and-bye the Kindergarten came home too; it was not flourishing financially and it ended its days in the house that was so often to give hospitality to friends and interests. When she was seven, Phyllis Monk entered the Blackheath High School and for twelve years this place held her heart and her mind and her body. Her heart was bestowed there from the day she entered; her intellectual capacity, grappling at first with a bell which must be rung just so, in the Junior Band, was trained through successive Forms

in the School and gained her, in 1901, a G.P.D.S. scholarship. Physical activities were slower to appear, but when they did, they threatened to swamp all else. For some years the High School girl returned home after lessons with her home-work in its bag and her long black plait in due order. Then there

came a day, when she was perhaps thirteen, when school friends, in the forcible manner of devotees, suggested Games to her. Games! She became, by the end of the story, Secretary of the Games Club, Captain of Cricket, Vice-Captain of Hockey and one of the Tennis champions. Photographs survive of her and her group, sombrely claspng cricket bats and hockey sticks, the Shield the centre and focus of an ardour which even the machinery of a School group has failed to obliterate. For her last year, Phyllis Monk served Blackheath High School in the capacity of head girl. For this office, and at this time—it was during the



MISS PHYLLIS MONK, M.A.

headmistresship of Miss Gadesden—a many-sided personality was needed fully to represent the School. In Phyllis Monk work and games were present in a high degree, together with the devotion to her School which, at nineteen years old and after twelve years, had amounted to an enthusiasm which was to colour all her life. One could not know her, in later years, without entering too, a little, into those tremendous precincts where sentimentality was eschewed and an almost marine atmosphere of “keeping on, keeping on” was expected and accepted.

The swift descent from head girl to a ‘Fresher’ at Girton took place in 1904. But

even here, to be a 'Blackheathen,' at Girton, took one into most circles. The offices of Head Captain of the Fire Brigade, Vice-President of the Debating Society, Secretary to the Tennis Club, and, in her first year, President of the Spontaneous-speaking Society, were combined with the official designation of Phyllis Monk, upon the Girton register, as reading for the National Sciences Tripos. This included the study of Chemistry, Physics and Botany, and in 1907 she gained a Second Class in the Tripos, leading to the M.A. degree of Dublin University.

After such an apprenticeship it is no surprise that teaching was the profession chosen. With a characteristic necessity to arrive at the roots of what she had undertaken, Miss Monk took the diploma in the Theory, History and Practice of Education, after a year's work under the Oxford Delegacy for the training of teachers, and for her teaching experience, worked at the Oxford High School, under the headmistress-ship of Miss Haig-Brown. There followed two of the posts which were afterwards to form the background of her experience before taking up her special work at Chorley Wood College. The first was at the Sydenham High School, the second at Roedean School, Brighton.

Miss Monk was at Sydenham High School from 1908 to 1911; the High School girl became the High School mistress, playing games with the girls, teaching science and steering a young and vigorous form. The move to Roedean, made in 1912, was something of an adventure. The suburbs were exchanged for the Downs, the High School day pupils were replaced by the "Public School" boarders, and the position of the Assistant Science Mistress was now that of the Head of the Science Department of a School of some four hundred pupils. Noteworthy results were speedily apparent under the Head of Department. Science ceased to be too frequently regarded as an extra in one's education. Tireless argument and a quiet presence waited upon housemistresses and the plea for science triumphed. Physics, Chemistry, Botany and Hygiene were placed upon the individual plan of most girls, besides having an official place upon the school time-table. A series of medical students moved on from Roedean with their First Medical behind them. There was, however, still time for out-of-school activity, and Miss Monk went scouting with the Guide Companies. The six Roedean years were years

of intense hard work, but recreation, if it was scanty, was glorious. The sea lay just beyond the playground and the Downs rolled inland, mile after mile.

Here it seems the Career might have held to its course and here have finished strenuous and satisfying days. It came as a surprise to many of Miss Monk's friends to learn that she was returning to London. Her object was to take temporary posts for a short time in order to widen her experience. She was next heard of at the Avery Hill Training College, at King Alfred's Co-educational School and at the Godolphin and Latimer School at Hammer-smith. For two terms her work was thus divided, and, in the autumn of 1918 she joined the Staff of the Fulham County Secondary School. She had now had a wide experience of differing types of schools, had lectured at a training college and had met boys, as well as girls, across the classroom floor. All seemed in good order for a successful storming of the citadels of solid advancement in her profession. The next news of her would be pleasant, but hardly surprising, one surmised. As it happened, it was singularly surprising. Miss Monk became the headmistress of five girls, the School at its opening was the wing of a hostel, and there were no playing-fields. In fact, the greatest adventure of all, the substance, before which the rest was to become shadow, was in being.

Chorley Wood College for Girls with little or no Sight was an experiment in which many people believed, more or less, according to their capacity, but which needed an executant. The executant was herself an experiment. It was true that she had had a plentiful experience of the kind of liberal education which was planned for the girls of the new College, but she had had no previous experience of work with blind girls, and her Career so far had seemed to have prepared her for a very different sphere. There was need of courage, of infinite patience and of leadership.

Courage marked the opening of the College, a term before the builders could be ready, at Jordans Hostel. The Committees of the National Institute for the Blind and of the Hostel were prevailed upon and the school life began in January, 1921. Patience believed and schemed, as though the little group of five were a High School. It was time-tabled and regulated as though it were established and recognised. Leadership pitched upon individuals to help in the work, expected that

they would say 'yes' and found that they did.

The School moved to its own quarters at Chorley Wood in the Summer Term, 1921. It now numbered eight pupils. Games began. Miss Monk invented them. It was necessary to play as though one played for Roedean; woe to her who attempted to potter, as though a game were merely an easy way for the staff to employ several girls at once; woe to her who deserted effort in the expectation of a whistle. One played until the whistle blew, as hard as one possibly could. That was clear. Despite, however, the strenuous organization of the schools of her experience, it was Miss Monk's scheme from the first that marks, rules, and rewards (good or bad) should form no set part of the life of Chorley Wood College. The individual is encouraged to judge her own actions and to entertain a large expectancy with regard to her own possibilities. The time-table which had so carefully provided for the five must now find room for some thirty-four girls, for examination candidates, whether for School Certificate, Responsions, Froebel Part I. or Music. In 1925 the school was inspected by the Board of Education and recognised as efficient. After nearly eight years of life the Old Girls of the school begin to be a factor—three of them are University members,—there is a School Magazine, a Choral and Dramatic Society and a Crafts Guild whose members acquire "accomplishments," practical, ornamental and entertaining. To indulge the genius of individuals and to arrive at a true "respect of persons," to be complete in her dislike of "artificial stimulus," to believe in the personalities of those who work with her (an infallible method of securing them)—these are some of the ways of Miss Monk. There is a bold absence of ceremony in her formalities on "special days." The visitor who comes as a friend is at home; he who expects punctuated applause and a red carpet to his approach (we speak symbolically) is probably uneasy. The school lives a vigorous life but its ardour is varied; perhaps it is to run a mile before school round the playground path; but perhaps it is to gather, on some autumnal day, "these homeless leaves" into one's pocket. It is taken seriously, whichever way it is, and the ardour is shared.

Yet from the early days there has needed to be one who could not share her lot entirely. She must hold to her belief, persist where there seems but vague hope, never allow that

hope to die until others see where she is seeing. It is as big a task as could fall to the lot of a worker, and mercifully it has fallen to a worker. Epics belong to the conductors of Polar expeditions and Atlantic flights; an Epic in connection with a girl's school might appear an extravagance. It may not seem so, eventually. It may be, that, at some Assize, as yet hidden, the planning, launching and sustaining of this adventure will jostle in an unexpected companionship, and be found to stand in the brilliance of a hitherto unperceived shining.



LEAMINGTON GUEST-HOUSE FOR THE BLIND

AT Leamington the National Institute for the Blind now has a very delightful guest-house for elderly blind ladies in reduced circumstances. These ladies were formerly resident at Hoole Bank, Chester, and fifteen of them removed to their new quarters in October last and were joined by three others later. The new Home, which is the gift of Mr. J. G. Wilson of North Bailey, Durham, is called "Bloomfield," and is in Holly Walk, Leamington. It is an attractive house, eminently suitable for the purpose, and the ladies have expressed great satisfaction at their new abode. The drawing-room, dining-room and bed-rooms are all bright and airy, and the house is within reach of the lovely public gardens which form a well-known feature of the town. The guests are allowed to take part in the amusements of the town, and to attend whatever church they like. Several residents took a great interest in the advent of these ladies, and at once called to take them for walks. The house has its full complement of guests, eighteen in number, and there is a long waiting list.

We wish them all happiness in their new home, and hope that they will make a great many friends in Leamington.



THE new residential School for the Blind, opened last month in Cardiff, is a two-storey building situated in a residential part of the town, and contains a spacious entrance-hall, class-rooms, dormitories, handicraft and recreation-rooms. The School was designed by Mr. W. James Nash, F.R.I.B.A. The Principal is Mr. F. E. Hewitt, who was formerly First Assistant Master at the Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind.

CHRISTMAS AT THE HOMES



CHRISTMAS is essentially a children's festival, and so we begin with the babies !

At "Sunshine House," Leamington, a very happy Christmas was spent. With Christmas Eve came the great business of hanging up tiny socks at the end of cots—a most exciting time for the babies.

Even after the socks were finally fixed to their liking many jaunts were taken to the bottom of the cots to see if that sock was filled or not ! Sleep overtook one tiny man before he could get quite properly into bed again and there he lay—just touching his sock, a very contented expression on his little face—fast asleep.

"Very early Christmas morning," writes the Matron, "there were sounds which assured one the family had awakened. Trumpets, squeaking dolls, drums, and happy, excited voices soon aroused those who were not old enough

to know what Christmas really meant. Only the tinies raised no objection to being dressed when the time came—much nicer to play with those toys Father Christmas had put in their stockings, so the larger fry thought. Breakfast even was not as keenly welcomed as usual. After breakfast came another surprise—a different kind of dress for each baby (most some summer ones they had forgotten about). One tiny golden-haired tot was a fairy,—silver wings and all complete, and there were two miniature Nurses—uniform correct to the last stud ! Changing dresses for 30 small and very excited people took quite a good while. Each one had to be admired many times by the Staff and then they examined and admired each other. Next a bracelet each was added, made of scraps of odd ribbon ; the babies thought them very wonderful. When the various costumes were completed a double quantity of the usual sweets came along—also some visitors. Then Father Christmas



CHRISTMAS AT SUNSHINE HOUSE, SOUTHPORT.

with yet more sweets and a toy for each baby. Dinner next, and in spite of excitement it was much enjoyed. A special plum pudding for the older babies was the subject of much discussion, but quite approved of. Our doctor came to see us at dinner time and brought some friends. After dinner, the usual mid-day rest, not quite so many sleepers as on other days. Crackers after the rest, which the babies thought a great joke, laughing heartily at the "bangs"; soon every baby was the proud possessor of a paper hat. Next games until it was time for the Christmas Tree. It was teatime all too quickly and for tea there was a very large iced cake, given by Dr. Wardrop. After tea more crackers and games until bedtime, when a tired but happy little crowd of babies wended their way to bed, still talking of all the events of the day. In a very short time they were all snugly tucked up, soon fast asleep, many of them hugging their new toys tightly, and not a sound was to be heard in any of the night nurseries.

"Then the Staff cleared one of the largest rooms and danced to wireless music and so ended another very happy Christmas Day."

* * *

AT SOUTHPORT, Christmas Day was talked of long before it arrived—secrets were whispered, snatches of new songs were heard and carols were in great demand. The babies helped to decorate the Home with holly and mistletoe and made gaily coloured paper chains, during which time one baby—John Powell—"who," Matron writes, "is almost six years and has been with us since eight weeks old) discovered that he could see the colours with his left eye; this caused great excitement and when the Christmas Tree was lit up with its various coloured bulbs he could tell each correctly. The last day of School came and the great secret talked about was revealed—at 3 o'clock in danced the sweetest little fairies and goblins, dressed in white with silver tinsel wings and wands, and the goblins in green and brown. They danced and sang and recited and did great credit to their school teachers. After the concert they had their "breaking-up" tea party with their own special treat of chocolate biscuits and crackers to follow.

"Christmas Eve came, and stockings and wee socks were hung up at the foot of each cot with perfect confidence that Santa Claus would bring the desired gift. Father Christmas (myself) jingled his sleigh bells and with the

Nurses singing carols behind we gathered up each sock to fill—during the night one heard at different hours the piping of a trumpet or drum, and when 6 a.m. came there was a regular vocal and instrumental band. By 8 a.m. all toys were laid tidily on beds and the little family trooped to breakfast, and afterwards there were games and new toys to be played with, and then dinner—which consisted of turkey, greens, potatoes, and their own special sponge pudding with cherries in and custard and the holly in the middle. Loud cheers greeted the pudding as it was held aloft.

"At 2.30 the Mayor and Mayoress arrived with many friends—the Mayoress distributed the presents from the tree and the children gave their concert again, which was greatly applauded. The Mayor and Mayoress stayed to tea—the babies had special iced cakes each to their own names on, crackers and sweets—and the dining-room resounded once again to their happy laughter and ringing cheers. After tea there were the new baby dolls to be cared for and more games and fun.

"So ended our sixth Christmas Day full of joy and happiness. Throughout it all the babies never forgot Whose birthday they celebrated, and as each tiny head was pillowed the strains of "Away in a manger, no crib for a bed" could be heard long after lights were out.

"Since the beginning of H.M. The King's illness our babies have "remembered" him in their prayers—a little prayer they have always used for any of their Sunshine sisters and brothers."

* * *

THE Christmas festivities at Court Grange commenced on Christmas eve at six o'clock with the very serious business of hanging up long stockings on each cot, and a very protracted examination of the fastenings to see if all were secure. At 6.30 p.m.—following a knock on the various nursery doors—Santa Claus, in the conventional robes, entered, shook hands with each child, gave each one a toy, and wished them a very happy Christmas. He promised to return later and fill their stockings to "over the top," and on Christmas morning the babes found he had kept his promise.

"From 6.30 a.m. on Christmas morning, mouth-organs, trumpets, drums and whistles were in full blast. Every toy was pummelled on the chance of a hidden squeak, and in many cases innocent-looking rabbits and other animals, who should have known better, produced squeals and added to the joy of the

babies. Dinner consisted of chicken and a steamed pudding decorated with cherries which the babes insisted on calling "Devonshire Christmas pudding." After dinner the usual rest-hour took place, slightly prolonged, then more musical exercises and tea. Tea included a very lovely Christmas cake, and after tea the babies gave the nursing staff their "surprise," which consisted of singing "Once in Royal David's City" and "Away in a Manger." The singing was led by the senior boy, Ronald, not quite six years old and was rendered amazingly well. After tea, playroom and bed.

"On Boxing-day another visit from Santa Claus in person who distributed the toys from a very large Christmas-tree gaily decorated. The babes were all dressed in party frocks, looked adorable and knew it. Santa Claus promised to come again next Christmas, and one babe wanted to know if next Christmas would be to-morrow.

"The babies were amazingly good. Our cat-burglar's behaviour was so exemplary that we suspected illness, but he remains quite well, so we are forced to the painful conclusion that any day now he will "break out," as all good things—like Christmas—must come to an end!"

* * *

CHRISTMAS was an enjoyable time for the inhabitants of the new Guest-House at Leamington. On Christmas morning the guests sang carols outside the matron's door. Afterwards they all went to Church, and came home to a big Christmas dinner. Several visitors came during the day. On Bank Holiday there was an enjoyable sing-song in which everyone participated.

* * *

THE Convalescent and Holiday Home at St. Leonards-on-Sea was the scene of much gaiety. In addition to the usual winter residents, several visitors came to spend Christmas with old friends, and the Matron and her staff had a company of forty-five to entertain. The house was beautifully decorated, and the morning of Christmas day was spent in carol-singing and present-giving and receiving. After a most successful Christmas dinner followed a quiet afternoon with high tea at 6.0 p.m., the evening being spent in singing and dancing until bed-time. On Boxing-day there was a delightful entertainment consisting of a carnival night, and there were other entertainments during the course of the week.

AT the Brighton Home for Blind Women Christmas was celebrated in right royal fashion. Some of the residents attended Midnight Mass and Early Service. At breakfast there were five or six presents on each plate and there were thirty-five gifts in money and kind. There was a fine Christmas dinner, followed by tea and supper, and the evening concluded with a dance. One guest aged 81, who has been at the Home since 1922, said she had never had such a happy time since she left her own home.

The annual bazaar was held during the first week in December, and was a great success, the result this year being £113 5s. 8d.

* * *

"FESTIVITIES" is not quite the word to describe our very quiet Christmas rejoicings," writes the Matron of the Institute's Home at Clifton, Bristol. "With Christmas morning came the opening of parcels, of which all the women had three or four each, from their own friends and from friends of the Home. Then Church for all those able to go, followed by lunch consisting of turkey, Christmas pudding, mince pies, dessert, crackers and wine—all gifts from friends. In the afternoon, tea with cakes, biscuits and sweets, again all gifts from friends. After tea, our old friend, the gramophone, played favourite music for a couple of hours. Supper at 8.30, and so to bed."



BLIND BABIES' DAYS

THE gross receipts of the street collections made on September 22nd and September 25th, in London and the suburbs, for the Blind Babies' Homes of the National Institute for the Blind, amounted to £2,613 13s. 10d. The cost of collection amounted to £137 5s. 6d., the net result being £2,476 8s. 4d., which sum has been paid into the Blind Babies' Fund.



FOR THE BLIND

BY the kind permission of the Directors of the Brighton and Hove Albion Football Club the annual collection on behalf of the National Institute for the Blind was held on Christmas morning, and, as hitherto was undertaken by the members of the Supporters' Club and their friends. It resulted in the splendid amount of £36 3s. 10d. in addition to which a donation of £1 1s. has been kindly voted by the Committee of the Supporters' Club, making the total £37 4s. 10d.

THE BARCLAY HOME AND SCHOOL

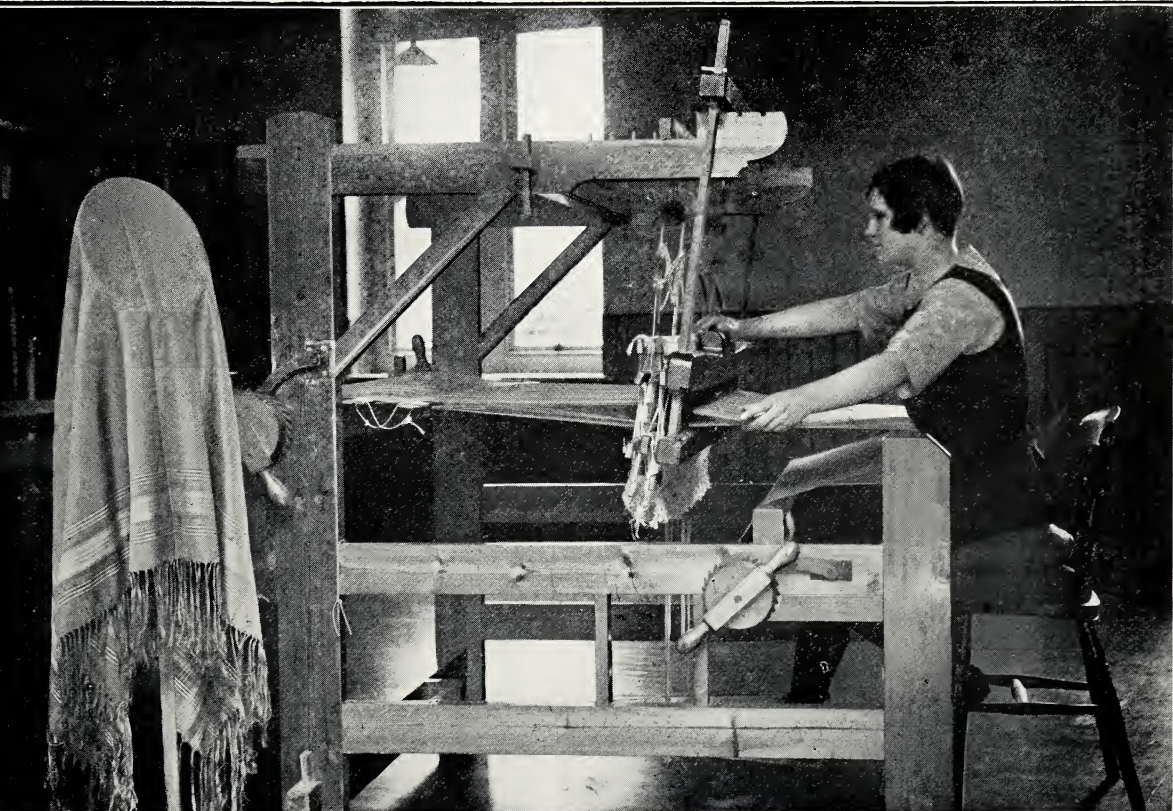


WEAVING is an art which has proved fascinating to many generations of workers. It is one of the oldest—if not *the* oldest—of handicrafts. Prehistoric man took long grasses and interlaced them, making for himself clothing and shelter, and this may be said to have been the beginning of an art which to-day finds expression in textures and designs so elaborate as to make the

results often things of great beauty. It is a very suitable handicraft for blind workers who, by means of a careful arrangement of their materials, are able to evolve intricate patterns and to fashion most successful garments. Many of these fascinating things may be seen and bought at the Barclay Workshop in Crawford Street, London, and at 22, East Street, Brighton. They are produced by blind workers who received their training at the Barclay Home and School at Brighton, where both weaving

and knitting form important subjects of the curriculum.

The Home itself was founded in 1893 by the late Hon. Mrs. Campion in order to give an industrial training to blind girls, and it was the first place of its kind in which they were trained to earn money by learning manual trades. The story has once before been told in these pages, of how a blind scholar of the Royal Normal College who, owing to bad health, had to leave in 1888 without finishing her education, found a friendless blind girl in an East End Workhouse to which she had returned after spending three years at Southsea Blind School. The Poor Law Guardians would have allowed a small sum for her maintenance if a suitable home could have been found for her, but there was no such home, and the girl died at the age of 18 “not from disease, but from real lack of motive or interest in life.” Her friend, whose own means were limited, resolved that she would



WEAVING SILK SHAWLS.

do her utmost to found such a home even if it was but on a small scale. With great difficulty she started a home at St. Leonard's-on-Sea, but without success. However, she persevered. The Hon. Mrs. Campion became interested and formed a committee, and a charitable friend, Mr. Alexander Charles Barclay, came forward and gave them £500 to start the Home. A fortnight later he died. The Home which was opened in February, 1893, was called the "Barclay Home" in his memory.

Those at the head soon found that good results were, to a considerable degree, dependent on the earlier training of the workers and they decided to open a junior department where, in addition to industrial training, a good all-round education should be provided. The venture was most successful, and to-day there are in the elementary school, sixty-six pupils from five to sixteen years of age who are learning all the usual school subjects including music, singing and gymnastics, as well as Braille, typewriting, basketry and other hand-work. A visit recently paid to some of these classes proved most instructive. They are conducted by experienced teachers who seemed to know just how to prevent their scholars' interest from flagging, and the children appeared to be particularly bright. A mental arithmetic lesson which was in progress at the time of visiting the School led along pleasant paths to geography, history and other subjects, and the visitor left lamenting that her own school days had not fallen in these pleasant times. Another arithmetic lesson was being given with the help of the arithmetic frame for the blind, and little ones were learning the Braille alphabet by means of the Braillette board. In the gymnasium many small people were marching and doing exercises to the accompaniment of the piano and their own tambourines. In yet another room a class for myopes was in progress, attended by prospective teachers, and interesting demonstrations of teaching were given. In short, school seemed to be as attractive as possible, and none of the pupils showed signs of boredom.

The Technical Department, where the pupils are trained for the Workshops, is a real hive of industry. Here those attractive garments, as well as table-cloths of various shapes and sizes, were to be seen in different stages of completion. The nimble fingers flew along the thread of the looms, and here, there

and everywhere was the teacher, Miss Eide, who has carried on her duties at the Home for over twenty years, and has a wide knowledge of her art. The knitting machines, too, turn out excellent work, and all kinds of basketry are also made. At present twenty-five pupils are being trained in these various handicrafts. In this Department there is a particularly interesting scheme of rewards consisting of yellow, blue and red badges awarded for good work. The red badge is the highest distinction; when it has been obtained several times the pupil is pronounced ready for the Workshops.

Nineteen girls who have graduated from the School are at present employed in the Workshops, being paid workers, and three partially blind ex-pupils are employed in domestic work at the School.

Considerable attention is given to house-craft, which is thoroughly taught to the older girls. We learnt that, at a Hallowe'en party, the meal was entirely cooked and served by some of the pupils, and a thoroughly enjoyable entertainment provided by them afterwards. Everybody has her little niche and fits into it admirably, and the visitor cannot fail to be impressed by the atmosphere of "busy-ness" and content which pervades this pleasant house. Of course there is a guiding spirit, and she holds the reins in hands which are both firm and wise. For over twenty years Miss Snowball has been the Guide, Philosopher and Friend of all, and it is largely due to her untiring efforts that this atmosphere has been created. For the Barclay Home *is* a home in the true sense of that often misused word. With its well-equipped class-rooms, its workshops fitted with the latest apparatus, its bright and airy dormitories, its peaceful and pretty chapel, it is a place in which it must be good to work and play.

Back in the late 'eighties a blind girl died at the age of 18, "not from disease, but from lack of real motive and interest in life." To the others who came after, both motive and interest have been supplied unstintingly in the Home which was founded in her memory.

E. G.



ACCORDING to the *Daily Express*, a blind negro, aged 20, won his freedom when arrested on a charge of begging on the streets at Gary, Indiana, by demonstrating to the police his ability to tell the different makes of motor cars by touch and hearing.

A CONFERENCE OF WORKSHOP MANAGERS

ON Tuesday, the 8th January, and the following day, an important Conference of Workshop Managers was held in the Armitage Hall of the National Institute for the Blind.

This Conference was called at the request of the Advisory Committee on the Welfare of the Blind and the Ministry of Health, for the purpose of discussing many important questions arising in connection with workshop organisation and management. The gathering was a very representative one, most of the industrial organisations in England and Wales having selected delegates. Sir George Hume, J.P., M.P., was in the Chair.

It is true to say that the discussions embraced almost every problem with which the Managers of Workshops are brought into daily contact, and the Report subsequently to be published should make interesting reading. As indicating the variety of subjects considered, we need only refer to the Agenda which was placed before the Conference as follows:—

Tuesday, 8th January, 1929.

TRADING ACCOUNTS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE, introduced by Mr. F. R. LOVETT, Welfare of the Blind Department, Ministry of Health. EFFECT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILL ON WORKSHOPS, introduced by Councillor W. W. REED, Chairman, Blind Persons' Act Committee, Portsmouth. RESEARCH AND NEW DEVELOPMENT, introduced by Dr. A. EICHHOLZ, H.M. Inspector of Special Schools, Board of Education.

Wednesday, 9th January, 1929.

WORKSHOP SALES AND SALESMANSHIP, introduced by Captain G. POLLARD, O.B.E., Secretary, London Association for the Blind. MANAGEMENT QUESTIONS, introduced by Mr. S. W. STARLING, Assistant Secretary, Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind. PROPOSAL TO RE-FORM ASSOCIATION OF WORKSHOP SUPERINTENDENTS, Motion by Dr. J. M. RITCHIE, Superintendent and Secretary, London Society for Teaching and Training the Blind. PROVISION BY WORKSHOPS OF TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT FOR HOME WORKERS, introduced by Captain C. W. M. PLENDERLEATH, R.N., C.B.E., President, West of England Institution for the Blind, Exeter.

It is not too much to say that those taking part in the various discussions showed a first-hand knowledge and close acquaintance with the subjects under consideration, and it is

interesting to note that, as a practical outcome of their deliberations, it was decided to form an Association of Workshop Managers in order that a competent Body may be available to which the organisations may look in the future for help and guidance in connection with the thorny problems which have frequently to be solved. It is understood that this Body will endeavour to do for industry what the College of Teachers of the Blind has already undertaken in respect of education, and in the belief that the new organisation will abundantly justify its existence, we look forward to the time when this new Workshops Association, the College of Teachers and the Union of Counties Associations for the Blind will, with the National Institute for the Blind, be working in complete and progressive co-operation.

As previously indicated, it is intended to publish a Report of the Workshops Conference in the near future, and copies will be obtainable at a modest charge from the National Institute for the Blind.



ADDITIONS TO STUDENTS' LIBRARY

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Steiner, Rudolf.	The Gospel of St. John	5



TWENTY years' valuable service as nurse to the North London Homes for Aged Christian Blind Men and Women, in Hanley Road, Stroud Green, were suitably recognised last month when Nurse Kuhn was presented with a case of treasury notes.

E. D. MACGREGOR PRIZE

WHEN Mr. E. D. Macgregor left the Blind Department of the Ministry of Health in October, 1926, there was a widespread wish on the part of his fellow-workers that his eminent services to the cause which they had at heart should be marked in some signal way. A sum of money was raised which at Mr. Macgregor's suggestion was invested so that the interest amounting to £4 4s. od. a year might be available as an annual award.

Mr. Macgregor's labours had in no direction been more fruitful than in the development and improvement of the Home Teaching service of the country, and in no branch of activity had he taken more personal interest and pride.

It was, therefore, not unexpected that Mr. Macgregor should suggest that the prize which is to bear his name should be offered for excellence in some part of a Home Teacher's work. Mr. Macgregor felt that the teaching of Braille and of Moon is among the most helpful services that can be rendered by a teacher, and desired that it should be made the subject of the competition.

The Union of Counties Associations of Societies for the Blind, which had taken the initiative in the matter, welcomed Mr. Macgregor's suggestion and asked the College of Teachers of the Blind if it would institute and carry out the competition. To this the College gladly agreed, and the General Executive has authorised the publication of the following regulations and conditions:—

The competition for 1929 will be held on the 2nd May at the School for the Blind, Swiss Cottage, London, N.W. 3, and at Leeds Incorporated Institution for the Blind.

The competition is open to all approved Home Teachers (whether certificated or not) and to entrants for the Home Teachers' Examination.

Intending competitors must send their names to the Hon. Registrar of the College, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W. 1, on or before 18th March, 1929.

The competitors will be required:—

(1) To prepare schemes of instruction on the teaching of Braille and of Moon. These must reach the Hon. Registrar fourteen days before the date of the Examination.

(2) To give a practical demonstration of their ability to write and read Grade II. Braille

and to answer questions on the principles and details of the system; to read a passage of Moon and to answer questions on the construction of the system.

(3) To give lessons to a blind pupil on any parts of the subject chosen by the Examiners.

The results as determined by the Board of Examiners will be transmitted to the Union of Counties Associations. The award rests in its hands and in all matters relating to the construction or interpretation of the above regulations its decision shall be final.

Selected competitors may be required to attend a meeting of Union of Counties Associations.



BLIND MASSEURS IN LATVIA

WE learn from the *Esperanta Ligilo* that activities on behalf of the blind of Latvia are developing and advancing along practical lines, and that at the end of April last, three blind men and two women candidates completed the prescribed course of instruction in massage. They undertook training simultaneously with twenty-five sighted students, and in spite of inevitable difficulties, they were successful in obtaining the highest possible diploma. Four of the masseurs in question have already gained suitable posts in hospitals and sanatoria. The training course extends over a period of six months, and includes the study of anatomy, physiology and pathology.

The Institution for the Blind in Riga has recently established a workshop in which two weaving looms have been installed. As this industry is an entirely new venture among the blind of Latvia, its ultimate success is as yet uncertain. We are also informed that the blind community are exempt from payment in regard to wireless licences, and that they enjoy the privilege of free access to the State theatres.



MASSAGE SUCCESSES

THREE blind candidates were entered for the examinations of the Chartered Society of Massage and Medical Gymnastics, and all successfully qualified in Massage and Remedial Exercises. Special attention was drawn to the excellence of their Anatomy papers. All three were Gardner scholars.

Four candidates entered for the Medical Electricity Examination; three passed the whole examination and one Part I.

HOME OCCUPATIONS FOR THE BLIND

BASKETS IN PALEMBANG CANE (II)



BEFORE proceeding with the actual making of the shopping basket, the canes placed aside for splitting may be dealt with. The split is begun at one end of a length of cane with the knife, taking care to halve the cane exactly; but once started the splitting is continued without the knife by pulling the two halves apart with one in each hand.

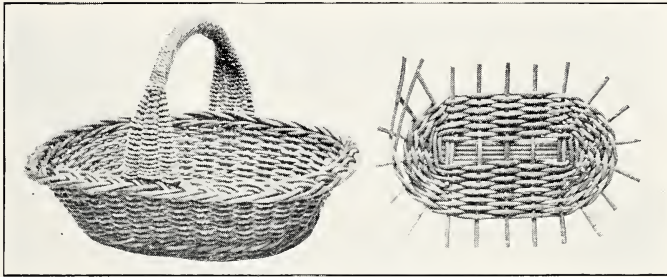
Palembang is not one of the best canes for splitting and some little practice will be needed before this operation can be performed successfully. It will be found that one half tends to get thicker than the other, and when this happens the thicker half should be pulled strongly, leaving the thinner half practically straight, the cane being held below the split with the other hand. After splitting, any ragged or sharp edges should be shaved off with the knife.

To begin the basket three of the bottom sticks are split in their centres with the knife and the other four threaded through them.

Now select a thin and soft hank of cane and place the doubled part over any group of sticks, then proceed to pair tightly round the four groups until two rounds have been completed. With the next round, the sticks are opened out into twos in the case of the groups of four, and twos and ones in the case of the threes. Work another round and then open out the sticks into singles, except one two which is left as it is throughout the bottom. After two rounds have been worked with single sticks, one of the pairing canes is dropped and the remainder of the bottom filled in with randing, the end of cane being drawn through below the preceding round when the bottom is five inches in diameter, and the ends of the bottom sticks cut off close to the work. A hoop for holding the stakes is now prepared. This should be about the same size as the bottom

and is made by coiling a length of cane upon itself. Next comes the "staking up," a stake being pushed into the bottom on either side of each bottom stick end, an extra one being inserted between the double bottom sticks. The stakes are then nipped with the round-nose pliers close up to bottom, turned up, and gathered into the hoop. Three rounds of three-rod upsetting are now worked, the stakes being brought well out if the basket is to have curved sides. After the upsetting, the basket is pinned to the work-board with the bradawl, and the siding proceeded with. Split palembang will be found very suitable for siding shopping baskets; it does not master the stakes to the extent whole cane does, and it gets over the difficulty of finding cane small enough to do this part of the work. Larger baskets such as dog baskets should, however,

be sided with whole cane. In siding with split cane, a new length is joined to the preceding one in the same way that straw plait is joined, the two ends being worked side by side for one or two strokes.



OVAL GARDEN BASKET.

When our present basket is six inches deep two rounds of top waling are added and then a three-rod border, the work having previously been levelled with iron and measure-stick. The diameter inside top can be seven inches, or more according to the style of basket required; but the worker is urged to endeavour to work to specific measurements in all cases. Nothing is easier than to evolve "new shapes"; but the supreme test of craftsmanship in basketry is to adhere strictly to a shape and measurements previously determined upon. The basket will now have a cross handle put on, the "bow" of which can be a piece of kooboo or other stout cane if available, or three of the largest canes from the palembang. In either case the "bow" is covered with whole palembang, making a "roped" handle similar to that found on most shopping baskets.

WASTEPAPER BASKET.—For the bottom of this, eight sticks each eight inches long are required, and these are threaded four through four and the bottom “tied in” in the same way as for the previous example. Keep two of the sticks together as before, endeavouring to space out the remaining sticks as equally as possible, and, after the sticks have been opened out, rand to a diameter of six inches. This basket has thirty-one stakes, twenty-six inches long, and four rounds of upsetting, the sides of basket not being curved, but sloping outwards to give an inside top diameter of nine inches. After upsetting, the sides are randed with split or whole palem-bang to a depth of six inches, when two rounds of three-rod waling are put on. These are followed by an inch of some different work such as seagrass or slewing to give variety, followed by two more rounds of three-rod waling. Another inch of ordinary randing is added, then two rounds of top waling and a four-rod border the ends of which are to be worked into a back track. This is done as follows: Place the basket on its side with top facing worker, take any border end and, after pulling it out at right angles to basket, carry it over the next end, under the next, over the next, and leave it resting under the next. Proceed in this way right round basket, threading the last few canes into their proper places to correspond with remainder. This basket requires no handles.

AN OVAL BOTTOM.—This is made by threading the required number of long sticks (say four) through the required number of short sticks (say seven), the number of sticks used being determined by the size and closeness of the basket it is proposed to make. The short sticks are spaced out so that there is a pair some distance from each end, and the remaining ones are spaced out equally between. Begin with pairing as for a round bottom, and after the end and shoulder sticks have been opened out singly, drop one of the canes and rand the rest of bottom, or pair the ends and rand the sides, taking each cane singly to do the latter.

A. G. K.

BLIND MAN'S PRIZE ESSAY

THE prize-winning paper in connection with a series of lectures on “The Ancient East and the Modern Mind,” given this winter by the Southport University Extension Society, was that submitted by a blind student, the Rev. Sidney A. Wilson.

WHAT THE BLIND CHILD KNOWS

IN a recent issue of the *Manchester Guardian* “a Teacher of the Blind” cited instances of the sensitiveness of the blind child with regard to atmosphere. This sensitiveness is aided, in part, by sounds so slight that those who can see often scarcely notice them.

“A blind girl,” she says, “once came to see me in the staff sitting-room. As soon as she came in she said, ‘Oh, this is a cosy room after the schoolroom. It’s just like home!’ I was amazed. Her remark was true enough. The furniture was upholstered, there were flowers on the table and pictures on the walls. But the child had simply walked into the room and, so far, had not even sat down in it. I asked her how she knew it was different from the schoolroom and she said, ‘The fire’s crackling (only radiators in the schoolroom!), and there’s a clock ticking.’”

“A small boy will know at once that Mr. A. is sitting in a basket chair reading a newspaper, simply because the chair and the newspaper have revealed themselves by faint crackles and rustles, while the particular master is recognised by even so slight a thing as the jingling of a medal on his watch-chain.

“I am often astonished, too, at the accuracy of outdoor impressions. Sounds play a part here, of course, but there is, in addition, a remarkable sensitiveness to weather conditions. Blind children can literally ‘feel the spring in the air.’ After a dull morning, I have heard a little girl of six remark seriously ‘I think it’ll clear up.’ And it has too!

“Once when I was taking the children for their usual walk there was a heavy fall of snow on the ground. Now snow is always a great difficulty to them because it muffles sound. It is, with good reason, often called ‘blind man’s fog.’ We had to pass through a famous archway in the city, and on this particular morning I was surprised when a small girl said, ‘We’ve just gone through the arch.’ I asked her how she knew, when all the sounds were so difficult that day. ‘Oh,’ she said, ‘I could feel the sun on my face one minute; then I couldn’t feel it, and then I felt it again.’

“So simple, and yet I had been unconscious of any warmth in that wintry sun!”

ACCORDING to latest statistics there are, in Spain, 25,000 blind persons.

OBITUARY

Mr. ALFRED E. WOOD

It is with deep regret that we have to record the death, from pneumonia, of Mr. Alfred E. Wood, Leeds Manager of the Liverpool Marine and General Insurance Company, and an active and devoted worker for many philanthropic organisations.

Mr. Wood was a member of the Executive Council of the National Institute for the Blind, a member of the Leeds Institute for the Blind, and Vice-Chairman of the Yorkshire Committee for the Blind. He was also Vice-Chairman of the Leeds Committee of the Missions to Seamen. He was well known in musical circles, and was for many years a member of the Chorus of the Leeds Philharmonic Society, being at one time its Honorary Secretary. He was Secretary of the Yorkshire Insurance Institute, a member of the Excelsior Lodge of Freemasons, and during the war Superintendent of A Division of the Leeds Special Constabulary.

He had the welfare of the blind of Yorkshire so greatly at heart that he will be sorely missed and his place will be difficult to fill. His pleasing personality, consummate tact and sound judgment have greatly helped to bring about and consolidate the happy relationship now existing between the National Institute and the numerous Institutions and Agencies for the Blind in Yorkshire.

By his death the National Institute for the Blind and the whole blind community lose a wise, loyal and devoted friend, but the memory and influence of his genial, kindly and unselfish spirit will remain.

* * *

Professor MICAIAH JOHN MULLER HILL

THE death has occurred at Golders Green of Professor Micaiah John Muller Hill, who was Astor Professor of Mathematics in the University of London from 1907 until 1924, when he became emeritus professor. He was Vice-Chancellor of the University of London from 1909 to 1911 and president of the Mathematical Association in 1926 and 1927.

Educated at University College, London, and St. Peter's College, Cambridge, from which he graduated as fourth Wrangler in 1879, he held the Chair of Mathematics at Mason College, Birmingham, before going to London. He published a good deal on mathematics, including the well-known "Theory of Proportion," and editions of parts of Euclid. Professor Hill, who was 72, became totally blind in his closing years.

* * *

Mr. A. E. ORR

THE National Institute has lost a friend in the late Mr. A. E. ORR, who died very suddenly on the 9th December, 1928, at Oxhey Lodge, a picturesque old farmhouse which he had converted into a modern residence.

Entering the India Public Works' Department from the Old Cooper's Hill Engineering College, Mr. Orr served in the Punjab from 1883 to 1916. At the time of his retirement he held the appointment of Chief Engineer of that Province. His work in connection with the severe famine of 1899-1900 received the special recognition of Government. Mr. Orr, after his retirement, served for a time with a Labour Corps in France. After the close of the war he settled at Oxhey Lodge. He was unmarried, but was fond of the society of young people and children, and he was a strong supporter of the Chorley Wood Sunshine Home, of the Committee of which he was a member.

* * *

Mr. THOMAS ALKER

THE death of Mr. Thomas Alker, the blind councillor blacksmith, of Aspull, in the Wigan coalfield, at the age of seventy-eight years, has removed a character who was well-known to Lancashire miners.

He made implements for prize ploughing, and in years gone by miners used to walk long distances to his smithy for him to make their quoits for their chief sport.

Mr. Alker became totally blind eighteen years ago, but remained a member of the Aspull District Council. He lived for seventy years in the house where he was born.

GREATER LONDON FUND FOR THE BLIND

THE Christmas month was a busy one. Concerts by blind artistes, given at Whitefields Institute, Anchor Mission, Wandsworth, and under the auspices of Primrose League Howard Habitation No. 1459 at Tottenham, addresses at Masonic Lodges and Sisterhoods continued until unusually near the Festival. A concert by invitation of the Mayor of Hornsey,—at which Alderman Kelland was the speaker—for the joint benefit of the G.L.F. and the Middlesex Association for the Blind was held on the 14th, the programme being provided by blind artistes with the assistance of the Northern Heights School of Dancing. The other mayoral concert, by invitation of the Mayor of Paddington, was timed for the first week in the month, and a strong programme, including items by such distinguished artistes as Miss Anita Desmond, Miss Mollie Seymour, Miss Nellie Norway, Mr. Laurie Kennedy and Mr. T. C. Sterndale Bennett, also Miss Hazel Carnegie with students of the London Theatre School, attracted a good audience. At the short meeting during the interval the speakers were Alderman Sir William Perrin, J.P., M.P., Mr. P. M. Evans, Acting Chairman of the Greater London Fund, and Mr. H. C. Preece. Mr. H. J. Wagg, Honorary Treasurer of the Greater London Fund and a Councillor of the Borough, proposed a vote of thanks to the Mayor. Miss Hunter, of the Committee of the Barclay Workshops for Blind Women, was in charge of the programme sellers, a number of whom wore frocks and overalls manufactured at the same Workshop. The collection and donations resulted in a sum of £43 1s. 4d.

Murray's Club kindly lent their premises for a bazaar held on December 5th. The Hon. Mrs. Ralph Glyn (as deputy for Lady Muriel Paget, O.B.E.) opened the bazaar at the unusual hour of 11.30, a device which succeeded in attracting household shoppers. She was received by Lady Fulton, Chairman of the Committee, and Lady Towse; a vote of thanks was expressed by Captain Gerald Lowry. Among the many hard workers for the success of the event were: The Hon. Mrs. Southwell Fitzgerald, the Hon. Mrs. Greville Nugent, Lady May, O.B.E., Lady Barton, Lady English, Mrs. Burr, Mrs. Alington, Miss Chalmers, Mrs. Curran-Gadsden, Mrs. de Pury, Miss Gillies, Miss Hawes-

Wilson, Mrs. Hutton, Madame Jubert, Mrs. Lennard, Mrs. Low, Mrs. Mackie, Miss Adey, Miss Newbolt, Mrs. Penrose, Mrs. Prest, Mrs. Rigg-Howard, Mrs. Soames, Mrs. Seaton-Reid, Mrs. G. E. Studdy, Mrs. Wolff, Miss Ida Wright and Miss Gladys Cooper. Stalls of goods made by the blind were provided by the Incorporated Association for Promoting the General Welfare of the Blind, Home Industries (conducted by the London Society for Teaching and Training the Blind) and textile goods by the Barclay Workshop for Blind Women. An enjoyable affair which was handicapped by the necessity for closing at six o'clock.

The blind Carol Party this year wore costumes to represent the tale of "Good King Wenceslas," the King, the Queen, Page, Woodman, Ladies of the Court and the Jester were all represented, and the innovation led to invitations to visit several new Clubs. They visited the Hyde Park, Queen's, May Fair, and De Vere Hotels, the Florida, Motley, Embassy, Murray, Studio, Uncle, Hambone, Cosmo, and Ciro's Clubs, the Hungarian, Kit-Cat, Romano's and New Prince's Restaurants, the Café de Paris, Café Verrey, Café Anglais, the Film Artistes' Guild, and Covent Garden and Olympia Dance and New Princes Restaurants, the Café de Halls—a comprehensive list which testifies to the success of this happy thought to secure a Christmas Box for the blind.

"Geranium Day" is a spring event, but it could not be forgotten in December, and on the 6th, a Conference of "Geranium Day" organisers was held in the Armitage Hall, presided over by Mr. H. J. Wagg, the speakers being Mr. W. W. Kelland (Chairman of the Geranium Sub-Committee), Mr. R. B. Hughes-Buller, and Mr. W. McG. Eagar.



HOW Monet, when half blind, finished his last picture, "Les Nymphéas," on the completion of which he had set his heart, is a touching story which M. Clemenceau recounts in his book on the well-known painter. For a long time Monet had not the heart to touch this painting for fear of spoiling it. One day he took heart and decided to finish it, and shortly afterwards he asked Clemenceau to look at it. The finished picture was a wonder of light and delicate reflections in the water. Monet, half blind, had completed a masterpiece.

The BEACON

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INTERESTS OF THE BLIND

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THE EVOCATION OF CHARITY



LAST month we stated our opinion that true charity must always be an active force in the blind world. A cognate subject is how best charity can be evoked and applied.

On such a subject, we can only generalise. The springs of charity and the fields of its culture are as diverse as man himself, and we can only essay to group the one into kinds as we group the other into

paces.

We can begin with one broad division into spontaneous charity and considered charity. The one is the fruit of emotion; the other the fruit of reason. The fruit of both is fair, but the fairest fruit of all—"lady of the garden of kindness"—is a hybrid, with the warmth of emotion to thrill it into being and the coolness of reason to direct it into action.

The misapplication of charity is definitely harmful, but we would rather see charity misapplied than absent. The misapplication is due to an ignorance which can be remedied; the absence is due to a hardness of heart beyond redemption.

We can, therefore, consider the whole field of charity, reasonable or unreasonable, as good ground worth cultivation, but we must recognize that each acre of it needs particular study. The soils are different, so the methods of culture must be different, and to produce the maximum crop is a problem ever present with those whose business it is to direct charity into its proper channels.

It is a difficult problem. Last month, we tried to demonstrate that any handicapped person—anyone without money or education or employment, or anyone lacking a sense—is a rightful object of charity, someone worthy of benefiting by "the disposition to think favourably of others and to do them good"; but it is infinitely more difficult to explain how that great ideal "to do them good" can be achieved.

Spontaneous charity is generally inspired by visible distress. That is why the blind beggar shivering at a street corner with his doleful whine of "Pity the poor blind!" has not entirely disappeared. The passerby feels a direct pull at his heartstrings, and accordingly spontaneously opens the strings of his purse. The question is: Does such charity benefit the blind beggar?

Quite definitely, it does not. Begging may be excusable, but it is always degrading. The person who gives need only imagine himself in the same position as the beggar to be quite sure of that. To a man accustomed to support himself by his own labours, the mere thought of asking something for nothing is disagreeable. Scarcely a soul on earth would willingly be dependent on others—not many blind beggars would choose to be Harold Skimpoles—but custom accustoms the weak-minded to a state of dependence, and the less novel it becomes the deeper one sinks into perhaps the worst slough across the paths of men.

Yet the feeling which inspires the immediate gift to the blind beggar is entirely right and

praiseworthy. Unfortunately, the heart does not apply to the head for advice, and the gift given in goodwill may be lowering a sinking man still lower in the quicksands of misery.

Supposing the heart does refer the matter to the head, and while the former half opens the purse, the latter snaps it coldly to? Then, the head has conquered the heart, the right emotion is forgotten, and perhaps by constant recurrence of the process, is eventually entirely killed—the hard head ruling the loving heart.

Such a process is directly opposed to all charity. The proper function of the head is not to eliminate a sentiment, but to direct it so that the soil wherein it falls may not be impoverished but enriched.

There are undoubtedly many cases of blindness where direct help in money, clothes, food, etc., must be given at once, without thought of its moral effect on the recipients. The point is that such actual relief should not be given in response to begging but with knowledge and experience of the conditions surrounding each case. Nothing should be more discriminate than relief.

The man or woman who cannot pass a blind beggar without a sentiment of pity is the basis of all the "charity of the heart" in the world. They only lack what may be termed technical knowledge, and it should be their desire and duty to seek such knowledge. They should make enquiries in all directions how best they can relieve the poverty which distresses them, the helplessness which appals them, the pain and the sorrow which flashes its woeful picture across their mind's eye even in the midst of revelry or content. They will find no difficulty in finding genuine cases to relieve, and they will train an emotion to its highest expression by knowing that it has been properly directed.

The "charity of the head" is of a different nature. It is inspired more by difficulties overcome than by difficulties to overcome or by difficulties that have conquered. It thrives on achievement. It will help talent and courage; it may neglect or overlook the unintelligent and the fainthearted. It spurs on the vanguard, but may create so great a gap between van and rear that the latter is detached and lost from the advancing mass of which it is always essentially a part. To avoid this danger, head should consult heart and temper a certain intellectual hardness into a more ductile sympathy.

It is obviously exceedingly difficult for all bodies working for the welfare of the blind to put effectively before the public these two points of view and show the happy mean. Yet

it is their duty so to do, as it is to them only that the public can look for the knowledge they need. In the laudable desire of raising additional funds, institutions for the blind should not employ cheap advertising tricks and "stunts." The facts alone—the fact that there are unemployable people without sight who need immediate help in money, food, and clothes; and the fact that there are employable and employed blind who need additional stimulus in their magnificent fight against their handicap—are sufficient to draw from a sympathetic and thoughtful public all the money that is needed. But it is essential that these facts should be presented in such a way that the emotion and the mind are equally interested and aroused to action.

Greater uniformity is desirable in the general nature of all charitable appeals made on behalf of the blind. They should all be above one high level, and should not descend to the "pathos" of the blind beggar nor to the "bathos" of cheap commercialism.

For should they not be worthy of the blind they seek to serve? THE EDITOR.



BRaille BOOKS IN AMERICA

IN the March number of *Outlook for the Blind* is given an account of the system prevailing in the States whereby printed books are transcribed into Braille. The work is included among the activities of the Red Cross Society, and 900 members are engaged in this particular sphere. The Headquarters are situated at the All-National Library in Washington, where details of the work are strictly recorded. The Library undertakes the training of probationers by means of a specialised course of correspondence, and the students are not accepted as definite workers until they have proved themselves competent Brailleists. The correcting of the books is undertaken by blind persons. More than 100 volumes are completed for circulation each month, and any special works are duplicated by means of the method invented by the Frenchman, Garin. For this purpose the ordinary writing-frame is used in conjunction with a certain species of paraffined paper, and by this means an embossed plate is produced from which several copies can be printed. The binding department is the sole property of the Red Cross Society, where skilled persons are employed in binding the volumes. The task of transcribing printed books into Braille is performed by voluntary workers, and provides sufficient remunerative employment for 40 blind persons.

PERSONALITIES

IN THE WORLD OF THE BLIND

GODFREY HEATHCOTE HAMILTON

(Mr. Hamilton has given us such an interesting account of his life, including so many valuable details of the National Institute in the "early days," that we feel it would be a pity to attempt to "edit" it. We therefore leave him to tell his own story.)



GLADLY comply with the request of the Editor of the BEACON that I should give him "some particulars of my life and work, with especial reference to activities in aid of the blind."

There is, however, little in my career that can be of

interest to BEACON readers; I have no scholastic attainments to speak of, and practically my whole working life has been chiefly associated with administrative duties in voluntary hospitals (for ten years at the Seamen's Hospital, Greenwich, and twenty-six years at the National Hospital, Queen Square.) But I am, as are Miss Armitage and Captain Sir Beachcroft Towse, amongst those who have been members of the Council for the longest time, and possibly one of the oldest servants of the N.I.B., of which I was at one time Secretary. What is more to the point is that during the short period of my paid service, the Institute—or the British and Foreign Blind Association, as it was then called—was in the stage of passing from the status of a semi-private concern to that of a public body.

It was in the spring of 1902 that I first met Mr. Kenneth Scott, F.R.C.S., an ophthalmic surgeon of some eminence in his day and the Treasurer of the British and Foreign Blind Association. He was greatly interested in the blind work, and had a special knowledge of

the blind of Egypt, where he generally spent part of the winter. Mr. Scott had very indifferent health—I have since been told the reason, and believe he was a martyr to medical science. He suffered from sleeplessness, and

as he lay awake at night he, a sighted man, would take a Braille book and teach himself to read by touch. He died a comparatively young man. He introduced me to the Council, presided over by Mr. Timothy Holmes, F.R.C.S., and I was appointed Secretary and allowed to carry on as well other work that I had in hand until it should be completed.

The Association had up to that time been largely maintained through the financial aid of the Armitage family. The good Doctor Armitage had been dead some years, and his widow had recently died when I first came to take charge. The office was situated in one of

two houses, occupied by the Armitage family in Cambridge Square, where the Association had taken possession of two whole floors. A whole house at Barnes was rented for the storage of books, another house in Marylebone Road was used for printing (with a hand lever machine), more books were stored in Harpur Street, W.C., where one of the stereotypers lived, and other work, stereotyping, braille music and the like, was done at different addresses.

We had to move our offices in any case, as the Cambridge Square houses were to be given



MR. GODFREY HEATHCOTE HAMILTON.

up, and it seemed to me that for economy and convenience the ideal to aim at was to gather all the branches together under one roof. One of the chief difficulties of this plan was that the blind workers who had hitherto worked in their own homes would find it irksome to travel to and from their work.

I do not think that anybody can conjecture how much the Institute owes the Armitage family. The old Association was run almost entirely at the expense of Dr. Armitage, and even in my time the financial burden of the family was still heavy. I felt myself to be in a difficult position, for I had only to express a wish for some new equipment and immediately it was given to the Association by Miss Armitage. It did not seem to me fair that the needs of a public concern should be so largely met by private generosity, and I made it my business to organise it in such a way that the work should be self-supporting.

We searched for Head-Quarters and found them in Great Portland Street. For a fairly long lease of a shop with rooms above, joined to a whole house in Bolsover Street, we paid a premium of about £200 and a rent of £160. (I am quoting from memory, but the figures cannot be far out). There was also a spacious basement which came in excellently for storing books. Our resources were so moderate that some hesitancy was felt at undertaking such a responsibility, but in the end it proved a lucky venture.

However, we were saving rent elsewhere, and obtained some revenue by leasing part of the Bolsover Street house.

Throughout the organisation of the centralisation plan I had the valued service of Mr. Burns, who later left the Association to take up important work under the British and Foreign Bible Society. The actual move was a great feat. The contractor badly miscalculated, and found he had not properly appreciated what it meant to handle several thousand volumes of Braille books. There was in my time a vast accumulation of hand-written Braille MSS., and I could never discover what the idea was to collect, and not use, all these books, the quality of the writing of which was very varied. On my suggestion a great batch of them were transferred, at a nominal price, to the National Library.

In those days of fewer machine-made books, many kind people used to write them by hand, and it was one of my duties to interview callers who had written or who wished to transcribe

books. I remember a dear old lady proudly bringing a complete embossed copy of "The Cloister and the Hearth" (I believe). She said shyly that she had found in the print copy a number of coarse expressions, such as "Stap my vitals" and "God's life." These, she said, she had taken the liberty of altering into something more suitable, using "Dear, dear," and "Bless me" instead. No wonder a famous Institution was frequently called "The School for the Indignant Blind."!

Shortly after this the Association was incorporated, largely I fancy at the suggestion of the Clothworkers' Company—always good friends and excellent advisers. Of the seven signatories to the Articles of Association only three survive, and I am one of them. The first executive under the incorporation comprised Timothy Holmes (Chairman), Miss Armitage, F. R. Armitage, Mrs. von Braun (née Armitage), P. Hart Dyke (blind), A. Henry (blind), A. W. H. Ranger (blind, afterwards Sir Washington Ranger), Kenneth Scott, Douglas A. Howden, Captain E. B. B. Towse (blind, now Sir Beachcroft Towse) Miss L. Douglas Hamilton and myself.

Mr. Timothy Holmes was a well-known surgeon in his day and Treasurer of St. George's Hospital. He was a fine old man, a true philanthropist, with simple endearing ways. I remember once calling on him and finding him engaged in translating children's stories from the German. He and I were always on the look-out for new recruits to the Council, and if my memory is not faulty I think that I had the great good fortune to suggest the name of Captain Towse. (It fell to the happy lot of my successor, Mr. Stainsby, to persuade Sir Arthur Pearson to join). I remember suggesting to Mr. Holmes that Viscount Wolseley should be invited. He asked why. I was a little unready to reply, and said that his lordship was blind in one eye. Mr. Holmes said: "Ha! Ha! so am I." A fact which I now heard for the first time. Mr. Holmes sleeps peacefully in the graveyard of Hendon Parish Church where I sometimes see his grave, which is in a quiet corner.

It was said in the BEACON in a recent number that I was the first editor of *Progress*. This was not so. When I took the magazine over at a few days' notice it was in charge of a member of the Boyle family, who were so much associated with the British and Foreign Blind Association in the early days. As I enjoyed the editorship, I asked to be allowed to retain

it after I ceased to hold the Secretaryship, and did so for four years. I learnt enough Braille to read the contributions and correspondence, and the work brought me into touch with many interesting people. I have, for instance, in my possession a typed manuscript of an article inspired by Carmen Sylva, the literary Queen of Roumania, which bears a note by one of her ladies, Baroness von Kranichfeld, who was herself blind, saying: "Please send the MS. back, as it is corrected by the Queen herself." Relying on the rule that accepted contributions are not returned, this interesting document was kept by the Editor. It is carefully corrected in purple ink, verbally and as regards punctuation, in neat fashion by the great Queen.

As I write, memories flood in upon me, and I must at long last plead guilty to a literary crime. One of our poets sent in a sonnet which would have fitted the page all right if it had been a line shorter. So we took out a line, not fully appreciating, I suppose, the importance of completeness in form of a sonnet, let alone sense. I hope our contributor has forgiven me, and will be consoled when I tell him that sometimes at night when sleepless I think remorsefully of this outrage!

The readers of *Progress* are to be credited with the first concession made by the Government in respect of the postage of embossed matter. According to plan, as many as could do so wrote to their Members of Parliament asking them to approach the Postmaster-General on the subject. The Minister received such a bombardment that he gave in on a point which for years had been steadfastly refused.

Soon after our installation in Great Portland Street, I had what, in my modest ambition, was considered to be a great chance of promotion. Mr. Holmes, on being told, wrote "the post is one you could hardly reject when offered." I resigned, and was given a seat on the Council in October, 1902, and have continued to serve in a humble capacity since that date. What I may modestly consider has been my principal job for the Institute is described in a testimonial the Council kindly gave me in the words: "He established an efficient organisation." A very near relative shortly afterwards became blind, and this fact helped to cement my connection with the great cause.

Most autobiographers make the mistake of approaching too nearly the present day. I strive to avoid this indiscretion, but I must refer briefly to one or two people and events.

Not very long after we settled in Great Portland Street we began to think of building. We had then as Chairman, Mr. Malcolm Macdonald McHardy, Professor of Ophthalmology in the University of London. Mr. McHardy was a splendid worker and a man of great character. He was very fond of yachting and his language smacked of the sea. When the late Mr. Henry and I went as a deputation to ask him to join and preside over the Council, he said to Mr. Henry: "Bring your starn-post to an anchor, Sir," meaning in shore language: "Sit down." When we came to start the building, our Chairman produced from some source, which has always remained unknown, a large sum of money which temporarily eased our anxiety as to finance. He had, however, expensive and novel ideas about the building which occasioned extra expense of some moment. It may be said in passing that he had built himself a house at Margate with an internal arrangement on the lines of a ship. If one went there for a week-end it was to find that one had to go to bed, after the Professor's great hospitality in the way of food and drink, by climbing an almost perpendicular ladder. The Professor was succeeded as Chairman by Dr. Ranger (later Sir Washington) who remained at the helm with Mr. Stainsby as Secretary for many years of difficulty and hard work. (The sad news of Sir Washington's death came to hand after this had been written.)

I must also mention a colleague who always remains constant in my memory—that is Mr. W. Gorst Clay, the Chairman of the Finance Committee in 1903 or 1904. Mr. Clay put the first of the newer type of printing presses into the work-rooms, and also caused a revolution in accountancy methods. He was a rising barrister and always took his holidays in Switzerland. The last time I saw him he said: "Well, good-bye Hamilton, I shall see you again in October, if I do not break my neck." A few weeks later, with three companions, he lost his life falling over a precipice in the Grand Paradis range.

At the National Hospital I have also some opportunity of serving the blind. As I write, the blind piano-tuner who was engaged twenty years ago, is pursuing his unholy trade to the distraction of all, but I understand he is nearing the last of his eighteen pianos!

Blindness is associated with several forms of the nervous diseases that we do our best to alleviate here. If we cannot cure we are sometimes able to help the incurable patients by

means of a pension. A blind incurable sufferer of the class the Fund was endowed to help always has a good chance of success.

In a questionnaire for "Who's Who?" one is generally asked some personal questions. These are some of the answers:—

My favourite recreation is work. I spare some time, however, for walking, tennis and golf and started fishing for trout last year.

I have written a great deal, mostly on hospital matters and topography. I am interested in the history of painting and have been able to indulge this inclination in many European cities.

I am a past President of the Hospital Officers' Association and the Hospital Officers' Club. In 1906 I won a prize of £100 and a silver cup offered for the best essay on The Economical Management of an Efficient Voluntary Hospital. The prize was handed to me by His present Majesty (whom God preserve). More recently I won a prize offered by Messrs. Dent & Sons, for the best sketch completion of Conrad's unfinished novel "Suspense."

* * *

(The above account of Mr. Hamilton's life and of his philanthropic and literary activities forms a very valuable addition to our series of "Personalities." During the many years in which he has worked for the blind, he has seen many changes in organisation and methods. Improved ways of teaching have kept pace with improvement in apparatus, and the Blind Persons Act has opened out new hopes and possibilities many of which have already been fulfilled. As a member of the Council of the National Institute for the Blind and of the Institute's Finance Committee, Mr. Hamilton continues to give valuable help in the blind world.—EDITOR.)



WIRELESS FOR THE BLIND

UP to the 13th February, 1929, 1,463 sets and 1,797 pairs of headphones have been distributed among the blind, the local Associations acting as distributing centres. Readers should note that in future all wireless sets sent out by the National Institute for the Blind will remain the property of the Institute. When sets are no longer required by their users they should be returned to the Institute.

NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND

E. W. AUSTIN MEMORIAL READING COMPETITION

IT is hoped to hold the ninth meeting of the E. W. Austin Memorial Reading Competition at the National Library on Saturday, April 27th, or Saturday, May 4th. Unseen passages will be read, and prizes awarded for fluency, ease of diction and general expression, as in the past. Intending competitors should send in their names to the Secretary, 35, Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W. 1, as early as possible, in order that detailed arrangements for the Competition may be made. It is intended to divide the adult competitors into two classes:—

"a" Those who learnt Braille type before the age of 16.

"b" Those who learnt Braille type after the age of 16.

(The Class "b" winner of previous years to be eligible only for Class "a" this year.) It should be explained that the standard of reading expected in this class is not so high as in Class "a." No contest will be held unless there are at least four competitors. The junior competitors are also divided into two classes: (1) under 12 years of age; (2) between the ages of 12 and 16.

The second Medal Contest will be held for the prizewinners of Class "a" in former competitions. The first Medal Contest was held in 1924.

The Committee consists of W. H. Dixon, Esq., M.A., E. le Breton Martin, Esq., J. de la Mare Rowley, Esq., Rev. W. J. Carter (winner of 1928 Competition), Miss D. A. Pain, Miss O. I. Prince (Secretary).



THE Hyde Park Dance Club are holding their Tenth Annual Bazaar at the Hyde Park Hotel, on Wednesday and Thursday, March 20th and 21st, from 2.30 to 6.0 p.m. Amongst other stalls there will be one in aid of the Sunshine Homes for Blind Babies, and readers should note that complimentary tickets may be obtained from Mrs. Claremont, Secretary, Blind Babies' Homes, 224, Great Portland Street, W.1, and that she would also be most grateful for gifts for the Stall of miscellaneous articles, produce or flowers.

LOUIS BRAILLE



THIS year we celebrate the centenary of the Braille system, and it is right and fitting that a magazine "devoted to the interests of the blind" should give an account of Louis Braille.

This man, who was indeed a "Beacon" to the blind, was born on the 4th January, 1809, at Coupvray, in the Department of Seine-et-Marne, about 23 miles from Paris.

His father was a harness-maker, and both his parents were well advanced in years at the time of his birth. Once, when he was about three years old, he was in his father's workshop and, thinking to imitate him at his work, he took up a sharp instrument which slipped and, flying up, put out one of his eyes. Sympathetic inflammation was set up in the second eye and he lost the sight of both.


He was ten years old when he was sent to the School for the Blind in Paris. He was an excellent pupil, doing well in literary, musical and mathematical studies, and learning to read the embossed Roman type which was then generally used by the blind. While still a

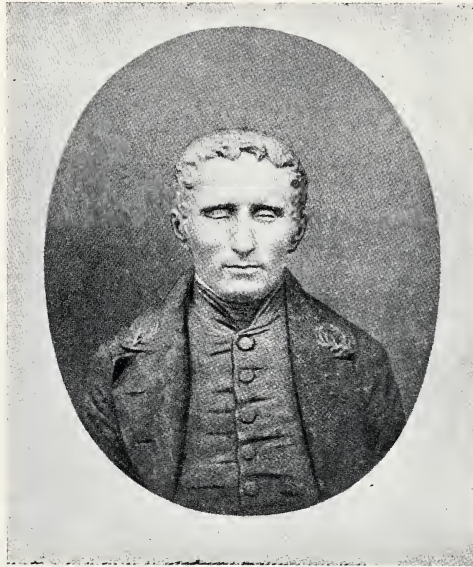
student at the School, he began to study the organ, and later obtained the post of organist in several of the churches in Paris. We learn that "his touch was decided, brilliant and free, indicating faithfully the whole character of the man." In 1826 he became a professor at the Institution at which he had been so brilliant a pupil. Here he taught grammar, history, geography, arithmetic, geometry, algebra and last, but by no means least, the pianoforte. He was greatly beloved by his pupils, and was in every way an excellent teacher. He wrote several treatises, amongst others an embossed work on arithmetic. It was his opinion that as so much space was required by the embossed method of writing and printing, the fewest possible words should be used, and this habit

of condensation, we are told, sometimes lent his work a certain degree of dryness. At the same time, he is always concise and understandable.

For years, as a pupil and as a professor in the Institution, at home or on holiday, he gave up all his leisure time to the task of trying to find a system by which the blind could write in relief. Of these the one which appealed most to him was that introduced by M. Barbier, a French Artillery officer, rich and philanthropic, who did all he could to promote the education of the blind. In 1825 Barbier

published a suggestion of embossing by means of a "point" method, the character containing twelve dots, six high and two wide. The character thus obtained was capable of an unlimited number of combinations, but it was large and unwieldy, and the letter was too long vertically to be covered with the fingertip. Louis Braille cut Barbier's character in half and thus produced

his well-known  On this basis he developed the first definite system of writing and printing in raised dot characters. This



LOUIS BRAILLE.

was in 1829. After some slight modification it reached its present form in 1834, and is the system which has since borne his name. Although both pupils and professors soon realised the superiority of this method over that founded on the Roman alphabet, the School authorities refused to change the old system, but he was allowed to teach it unofficially out of school hours. In 1854, two years after the death of its inventor, it was officially adopted at the Paris Institution. Although it was introduced into our own country about 1868, it was not generally accepted in blind institutions until fully twenty years later.

Braille was a practical musician, and it was in the course of his experiments in writing

down a music-notation for his own use that he adopted the dot system and instantly saw the possibility of its application to alphabetical characters and numerals. The basis of his music-notation is the ordinary Braille alphabet arranged in four rows containing ten letters each. The seven last letters in each row represent the seven notes of the scale, those of the first row being quavers and the following rows other time-values. He was obliged to leave the music-notation, though scientifically sound, in a very primitive state. Indeed it was only in 1922 that the full possibilities of the system were developed in actual practice.

Louis Braille was never a strong man, and he died of pulmonary consumption at the early age of 43. He was greatly beloved by friends and pupils, was ever ready to give advice, and never hesitated to sacrifice time or health for the benefit of his friends. We are told that on one occasion one of his pupils was about to leave the Institution with insufficient means of livelihood. At once Braille resigned one of his organ appointments in favour of this man. Dr. Armitage, in his account of Braille's life, says: "He desired that his friendship should be of some practical use to those who enjoyed it; therefore he not only carefully watched their conduct, but was often able to tender them good advice. Whenever a painful but necessary reproof had to be administered to a mutual friend, if others showed hesitation in undertaking the delicate duty, 'Come,' he used to say, 'I will sacrifice myself,' and set out on his mission. He so often performed this duty that he became known amongst his friends as the 'censor.'"

His name is a household word to all who are blind or working for the blind. He belongs to no country and to no age.

In celebrating the centenary of his system we must remember that, although the inventor did a very great thing in giving the blind this embossed print to read, he did a far greater thing in providing them with a means of setting down on paper, and reading back, a record of their own thoughts. In a periodical recently published, the names of Gutenberg and Braille were coupled as in the first rank of benefactors to humanity. To the world at large Gutenberg gave the printed word. To Louis Braille belongs, above all, the glory of giving to the blind words which they can write.

E. G.

A PROPOSED CONFERENCE

A LETTER was published in a recent number of the *Esperanto Journal* announcing that the American Foundation for the Blind, in conjunction with various other organisations, propose, during 1930, to inaugurate an International Conference on the Affairs of the Blind. They suggest that an interchange of developments in various countries would be welcomed. The suggested programme for the forthcoming Conference includes the following items as suitable topics for purposes of discussion.

1. International exchange of Braille books and music.
2. The absorption of the blind worker into a sphere of practical usefulness with special reference to workshop control and the employment of the blind in ordinary factories.
3. The education of the blind, particularly as regards appropriate methods for syllabuses adopted in the schools.
4. The question of maintenance, especially in respect of State pensions.
5. Special apparatus for the blind; e.g., stereotyping and printing machines, etc., with consideration of the best and most expeditious method of extending the knowledge of recent improvements and inventions throughout the blind community.
6. Reduced railway travelling facilities.
7. The desirability for more extensive propaganda work, directing special attention to the best means of securing the practical interest of the general public and bringing before them the capabilities of their blind citizens.

The American Foundation for the Blind express the hope that every country will send at least one representative to the projected Conference, and would be grateful for suggestions or information. Any communications on the subject should be addressed to Mr. M. C. Migel, President of the American Foundation, 125, East 46th Street, New York.

WE learn that there are now 125 blind persons employed at the Siemens-Schukert Works in Berlin. Piecework conditions prevail, but subsidies are also available. The piecework rates yield from 26 to 38 marks per week.

OBITUARY

**SIR ALFRED WASHINGTON GUEST
RANGER, D.C.L.**

WITH the death of Sir Washington Ranger, at the age of 81, there passes a man of distinction and learning closely connected with every effort made to improve the lot of the sightless—himself a blind man.

The son of Josiah Ranger, of Ashdown Park, Sussex, Alfred Washington Guest Ranger was born at Brislington, Somerset, on March 9th, 1848. He received his early education first at the Bristol Grammar School, then at a private school in that town. At the age of 15 he became blind. The blow was a severe one, but with characteristic determination he at once sought to adapt himself to the new conditions, and his indomitable will and steadfast courage enabled him to win for himself a position such as had never before been attained by a blind man. One of the first three pupils to enter Worcester College for the Blind, he passed on to the College of the same name at Oxford. Here he took first-class honours in the Jurisprudence School for the B.A. Degree, and subsequently first-class honours in the examination for the D.C.L. Degree. After experiencing many difficulties, he was admitted into a firm in Old Jewry where he served his articles and was eventually enrolled as a solicitor in 1879, the head of the firm testifying that he was "the best articulated clerk I ever had." In 1879 he set up for himself and established the practice of the now well-known firm of Messrs. Ranger, Burton and Frost.

An example of the extent and responsibility of his work is shown in the fact that he was for many years Solicitor to the Salvation Army. His connection with Worcester College for the

Blind continued throughout his life; he became a Governor and Honorary Secretary to the College, and eventually its Chairman, and, largely by his own efforts, raised the money for the erection of the present buildings. Having become interested in the question of type for the blind, he was induced to join the British and Foreign Blind Association (now the National Institute for the Blind), which had been recently founded by Dr. Armitage. He became its Chairman, and on March 19th, 1914, had the honour of receiving the King and Queen on the occasion of the opening of the new buildings in Great Portland Street, when he read an address in Braille and escorted Their Majesties over the Institute. He was closely connected with Sir Arthur Pearson in his work both for the civilian blind and the special work for blinded soldiers and sailors carried on at St. Dunstan's, of which Sir Washington became the Vice-President.

In particular he espoused the cause of the blind girl, being associated from its foundation with the Barclay Home at Brighton, and taking the very greatest interest in the opening, by the National Institute, of the College for

Blind Girls at Chorley Wood. He was for some years Honorary Secretary to the Blind Babies' Home at Chorley Wood, a work which enlisted his warmest sympathy and support. A matter to which he also devoted much time and attention was a fund for providing scholarships for blind boys. He was a Fellow of and Honorary Solicitor to the College of Teachers of the Blind, and, as Honorary Solicitor, rendered inestimable service to many blind societies.

He was a great reader, and collected a library of some hundreds of Braille books. In his younger days he was a fearless rider. In



SIR ALFRED WASHINGTON GUEST RANGER, D.C.L.

1893 he married Miss Alice Elizabeth Chambers, of Bendigo, Victoria, their family consisting of a son and three daughters.

His remarkable abilities and sane outlook on life enabled him both to pursue a successful career and to give invaluable help to those suffering from the same handicap. To future generations he will be a fine example of what may be achieved by a blind man.

* * *

Mr. GUY MARSHALL CAMPBELL

WE deeply regret to announce the death, at the age of 66, of Mr. Guy Marshall Campbell, Principal of the Royal Normal College for the Blind.

Mr. Campbell had been in poor health for some time. In spite of indisposition, he insisted on attending a meeting of the College of Teachers of the Blind on Saturday, February 2nd, and died in a car on his way thither.

The greater part of his life was devoted to the cause of the blind. Shortly after his birth, which took place at Newtonville, Massachusetts, his parents removed to the Perkins Institution for the Blind, and from his earliest years he was accustomed to associate with and help blind people. He was sent to be educated in England, and also travelled a great deal in Norway, Sweden, France, Belgium, Switzerland, and the United States.

For many years he assisted his father, Sir Francis Campbell, the founder of the Royal Normal College, and succeeded him as Principal in 1912. As his father's assistant he helped to conduct parties of pupils to various cities in Europe and the United States, where they gave concerts, thereby demonstrating the pioneer work of the College. In 1915 he effected an innovation in work for the blind by adding to the establishment a building devoted entirely to pianoforte tuning. He had specialised in physical culture, and was the creator of modern gymnastic training for the blind. He was also the first to introduce swimming and life-saving, cycling and roller-skating to the blind.

Mr. Campbell was one of the founders, and for some time the Honorary Secretary, of the Metropolitan Blind Union. He was also the founder and Joint Honorary Secretary of the Union of Unions for the Blind, now the Union of Associations for the Blind, and he was a Fellow of the College of Teachers of the Blind. He helped to found the British College of Physical Education, was for 28 years Chairman

of the Roller-Skating Committee, and also joined the British Olympic Association and the Royal Life-Saving Society.

Ably seconded by his wife, he followed in the footsteps of his distinguished father, and under his leadership the College has maintained its position as one of the chief educational centres for the blind in the country.

* * *

Mr. R. G. COWLEY

IT is with very great regret that we learn of the death, on February 4th, of Mr. R. G. Cowley, General Superintendent and Secretary of the Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind. Mr. Cowley had been absent from duty through illness since the 11th October, but resumed his work on the 29th January, so that he may practically be said to have died in harness.

Appointed to the position of General Superintendent and Secretary in November, 1919, he ably conducted the affairs of the Institution, freely giving his time and thought to the smallest problems, "from those of the Ministry of Health to the case of the smallest blind child in the Kindergarten." Of late years the work of the blind institutions had considerably increased owing to the operation of the Blind Persons Act. In the matter of making agreements between the local authorities and the Institution, Mr. Cowley showed very great skill and tact.

In addition to the work of the Institution, he filled the following positions:—Secretary to the Midland Societies for the Blind, Chairman of the College of Teachers of the Blind, Secretary to the Board of Examiners and Examiner for the Home Teachers' Certificate of the College of Teachers of the Blind, Member of the Midland Counties Association for the Blind, and Member of the Union of Associations for the Blind.

To all his work he brought the same conscientious spirit, and he will be very greatly missed.

* * *

SIR COLES CHILD, BT., J.P., D.L.

WE regret to announce the death, on January 29th, at the age of 66, of Sir Coles Child, Bt., J.P., D.L., of Bromley Palace, Kent, who was a member of the Executive Council of the National Institute for the Blind.

Besides his numerous philanthropic activities, which included the Chairmanship of the Kent Mental Hospital's Committee, Sir Coles

was Honorary Colonel of the 3rd Volunteer Battalion of the Royal West Kent Regiment. When only 23 years of age, he was appointed on the Commission of Peace, and ten years later was elected Chairman. So ably did he fill this office that he was later appointed Chairman of the West Kent Quarter Sessions.

On attaining his majority he inherited Bromley Palace, where he followed a long episcopal line, for the Manor of Bromley belonged to the Bishops of Rochester for more than a thousand years until it was bought by his father in 1835.

His life was largely spent in the service of his fellows, and he will be greatly missed by all who knew him. Sincere sympathy is expressed with Lady Coles Child and her family in their great loss.



GREATER LONDON FUND FOR THE BLIND

WITH "Geranium Day" fixed for April 9th, January has seen in full swing the great work of gathering helpers. Speakers, usually accompanied by a blind artiste, have visited almost daily gatherings of women to appeal for service in the cause of the blind.

The Sisterhoods, which for years past have steadily supported this aspect of the work of the Fund, have enrolled themselves with zest in the great "Geranium Day" Competition and Postcard Scheme, and the announcement that *The British Weekly* has given a handsome silver tea-urn as the "challenge cup," together with tea-spoons and tongs, for the private use of the champion collector, has stimulated their friendly rivalry. This scheme will doubtless secure many new friends for "Geranium Day" this year.

On the men's side, Loughton Brotherhood promised Mr. Preece their help on "Geranium Day," while his Masonic Brethren, preferring not to remember a Flag Day until it dawns, gave him something to keep the Fund in pocket in the meantime. Blind artistes were invited by the New Southgate and Friern Barnet Club Society to give an entertainment, which proved both a social and financial success; they also assisted with the Wandsworth Memorial Orchestra's concert, very kindly arranged annually for the benefit of the Fund.

Wandsworth "Helpers of the Blind" organised their second successful concert since

Mr. Harris assumed the Honorary Secretaryship. His Worship the Mayor (Alderman Lieut.-Col. G. F. Doland, O.B.E., J.P.) gave his patronage, but was prevented at the last minute from presiding in person; the popular ex-Mayor, Sir Henry Jackson, M.P., however, proved his old friendship for this Fund to be as strong as ever by making an eloquent appeal. Hornchurch Sub-Circle are to be congratulated upon beating their record by sending up a gift of £28 4s. 9d. as the profit on a Whist Drive which we hope may be considered a welcome annual event. Thanks are due to Mr. Brewitt and his Committee, and particularly to Mr. and Mrs. Harper.

The "Geranium Day" Sub-Committee, under the Chairmanship of Alderman W. W. Kelland, has sat frequently, and has given much time and attention with the object of securing a record "Geranium" Collection.



ADDITIONS TO STUDENTS' LIBRARY

National Institute for the Blind

<i>Author.</i>	<i>Title.</i>			<i>Vols.</i>
BIOGRAPHY.				
Lytton Strachey.	Eminent Victorians	...	...	4
CLASSICS.				
Cicero ;	Caecilius Divinatio (Ed. by J. R. King)	...	...	2
Horace ;	(Trans. by Sir A. De Vere)	...	...	2
Juvenal ;	Satires	...	...	2
Livy ;	Book I.	...	...	1
ECONOMICS AND COMMERCE.				
Leaf, W.	Banking	...	...	2
ESSAYS AND BELLES LETTRES.				
Birmingham, G. A.	Ships and Sealing-Wax	...	...	2
HISTORY.				
Cary, M.	History of Western Europe, A.D. 1-455	...	...	1
LAW.				
Leage, R. W.	Roman Private Law	...	...	5
LITERATURE.				
De Quincey, T.	English Lake Poets	...	...	7
Hughes, A. M. D.	(Ed.by), Edmund Burke (Selections)	...	...	3
MODERN LANGUAGES.				
Mobius, H.	Die Niebelungensaga	...	...	2
Hugo, Victor.	Ruy Blas	...	...	2
POETRY AND DRAMA.				
Pope, A.	Rape of the Lock. (Ed. by G. Holden)	...	...	2
POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCE.				
Lee, A.	Sociality	...	...	4
SCIENCE.				
Keith, Sir Arthur.	Concerning Man's Origin	...	...	1
THEOLOGY AND RELIGION.				
Gray, G. Buchanan.	Critical Introduction to Old Testament	...	...	4

COLLEGE OF TEACHERS OF THE BLIND

THE examination for home teachers will be held from April 30th to May 2nd, at the School for the Blind, Swiss Cottage, London, N. W. 3, and at the Leeds Institute for the Blind, Roundhay Road, Leeds. Candidates must send their applications to the Hon. Registrar of the College, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W. 1, on or before March 18th.

The examination for school teachers will be held on May 14th and 15th at the School for the Blind, Swiss Cottage. Applications must reach the Hon. Registrar on or before April 13th.



CRAFT INSTRUCTORS' EXAMINATION

UNDER the auspices of the College of Teachers of the Blind, an examination for craft instructors will take place from Tuesday, October 15th, to Thursday, October 17th, at the School for the Blind, Swiss Cottage.

Diplomas will be issued for each of the following crafts :—

1. Basket-making (including cane, rush and willow-seating).
2. Boot-making and Repairing.
3. Mat-making.
4. Brush-making.
5. Pianoforte Tuning and Repairing.
6. Circular machine Knitting.
7. Flat Machine Knitting.
8. Hand-Loom Weaving.

Applications, stating the subject to be taken, must be sent to the Hon. Registrar on or before Saturday, September 14th, accompanied by the examination fee and copies of two testimonials as to suitability, which consists of full apprenticeship or some other equivalent training. The fee is 2s. for the first examination and 5s. for each subject at any subsequent examination with a maximum fee of 10s. 6d.

This examination has been undertaken by the College to fulfil a demand expressed by many people that handicraft instructors should be accorded a greater measure of professional recognition, and it is suggested that at an early date the diplomas issued may be required by the Board of Education as the professional qualification for craft instructors.

WELFARE GRANTS

MR. NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN, Minister of Health, recently gave some instructive figures concerning the grants for various services during the last five years. From them we gather that Exchequer grants for Maternity and Child Welfare have steadily increased from £195,342 in 1923-24 to £223,368 in 1927-28, abundant testimony to the recognition of the need of this important service. On the other hand the grants for tuberculosis have fallen from £140,964 to £108,323, a clear proof of the grip which the medical officers of health have obtained on that fell disease. Welfare of the Blind grants have increased from £83,407 to £116,459. Mental Deficiency amounts have remained fairly steady.

These facts are gratifying as showing the appreciation of public needs, and of the necessity for the full operation of essential services.



A SIMPLE and pleasing ceremony took place on Monday, January 25th, when seventeen girls, employees at the North Staffs. Workshops for the Blind, having passed the necessary test, were enrolled as the Tenth Hanley Rangers by their Divisional Commissioner. Three home teachers, who have had previous experience with Guide work, are in charge of the Company. After the ceremony tea was served, and members of the Committee and other friends who were present were very pleased with the way in which the girls acquitted themselves both during the enrolment and whilst joining in the songs and games afterwards.



WE learn from America of an unique arrangement concluded between the authorities of the Museum at St. Louis and the School for the Blind in that City, by which certain stuffed animals and objects of special interest are loaned to the School. Last year these included eighty-six American birds, nine foreign birds, thirty-five mammals, five reptiles, and various specimens of art from China and Japan.



THE new workshops, sale shop, offices and social centre of St. Helen's and District Society for the Blind, situated at the junction of Boundary Road and Peter Street, were formally opened on the 31st January by the Rt. Hon. Lord Cozens-Hardy, D.L.

HOME OCCUPATIONS FOR THE BLIND

BASKET-WILLOW GROWING



SOME years ago, in the county of Suffolk, the writer was well acquainted with one "Blind George" who was known for miles around the village in which he lived for his ability in getting about the countryside unaccompanied, and his pluck and initiative, displayed not only in making baskets and travelling miles to sell them, but also in growing the raw material used in their production. As is usual in such cases, George was credited with feats beyond the power of mortal blind man to perform; but there is no gainsaying the fact that, although totally blind, he cut and harvested the crop from his osier bed year after year, and also performed the necessary hoeing and other work involved in this branch of agriculture. Assistance was required in the initial planting of the bed, but after that, George was able to do everything himself, and the bed was kept in cultivation by him for many years, until, in fact, old age compelled him to give it up. On the principle that what one sightless man has done, another may do, and also because some knowledge of the growth and characteristics of the chief material used in basket-making will be useful to all engaged in the industry, it is thought that a brief general outline of the science and art of basket-willow culture may be helpful.

March is the month in which most new beds are planted, but planting can be done at any time from November until sap activity begins in the following spring, the ground having previously been cultivated to a depth of nine inches and thoroughly cleared of weeds.

Basket-willows are propagated by means of "sets," which are lengths of from 9 inches to 12 inches, cut from rods of the previous year's growth. The one-year shoots which spring from these are cut in the following autumn, and the same "sets" or "heads" will continue to bear for twenty years or even longer, the crop being cut from them each year. During the growing period hoeing is necessary, as otherwise weeds will overshadow the young shoots, rob them of soil nutriment, and harbour insect pests, particularly during the first year.

The popular supposition that basket-willows thrive best on boggy, water-logged land is a

fallacy; indeed, one German expert goes to the other extreme and claims that best results are secured from dry land. The general opinion of experts in this country lies somewhere between these two extremes, the degree of moisture considered necessary varying with the species of willow it is proposed to plant. Broadly speaking, a good, rich, heavy loam is the best soil for high-class basket-willows. The common osier, *S. Viminalis*, will thrive on wet land, but the resulting rods are coarse and pithy, while at the other end of the scale, the tough, wiry little Dicky Meadows, *S. Purpurea*, thrives best on comparatively dry upland soil. About seventy distinct varieties of basket-willows are supposed to exist, and with this number to choose from, a variety suited to almost any soil can be selected; but the main consideration in choosing a variety is its suitability for the class of work made by the grower, or in the district. Black Maul is a well-known and excellent variety for general basket-work, and Pomeranian and Dicky Meadows for fine work.

The "sets" are planted in rows, the distance between these, and also between adjoining "sets" in the same row, varying according to the variety of willow planted. The "sets" are pushed into the ground, buds pointing upwards, to within about two inches of their ends. After three or four years these "sets" become firmly-rooted little stumps, so that there is no danger of injuring them by treading upon them, if ordinary care is taken; and being in regular formation they serve as guides to the movements of the worker. The crop is cut after leaf-fall, the cutting being performed with a sharp knife, each rod being severed as closely as possible to the stump. After being cut, the rods are tied loosely into bundles and placed in a shallow stream or pit of running water to await the recurrence of sap movement in the following spring, when they burst into leaf and can be peeled. Or they may, if the quantity is small, be left "on the head" till the spring, and cut and peeled at once.

Peeling is carried out with the aid of metal "brakes," a commonly used type consisting of two round steel rods held together by a spring, the willow rod being drawn through to split the bark, which can then easily be removed with the fingers. After peeling, the

willows are dried in the sun and wind, and stored away.

"Buff" willows are produced by boiling the rods with the bark on, in special boiling tanks, for about five hours. The boiling releases the tannin in the bark, thereby staining the rods a golden-brown colour. On removal from the tank, they are peeled and dried in the same way as "white." "Brown" rods are those which have been dried with the bark on, the term "brown" being a technical one, applying to rods of any colour.

With regard to the financial side of basket-willow growing, no profit can be expected until the third year, when the crop reaches maturity; but after that a well-cared-for willow bed can be a source of gain for many years. There is a sure market for high-class willows in this country at the present time, the home supply not being equal to the demand, but if the rods are sold as "green," in which state they are very weighty, the cost of carriage to a distance would considerably reduce the profit. It is a common practice to sell a bed of willows as it stands, the buyer cutting the rods and removing them to his own premises to be peeled. But to receive the maximum reward for his capital and labour, the grower should peel his own crop and sell it as "white" or, if facilities for boiling are available, as "buff." The cutting and drying of the rods for sale as "brown" is not recommended, as the demand for this is uncertain, and at times non-existent, whereas there is always a demand for "white" and "buff" if of good quality, and properly sorted and bundled. "The Cultivation of Osiers and Willows," 1s. 6d. post free from the Ministry of Agriculture, 10, Whitehall Place, London, S.W. 1, gives useful information, and the writer, who is in touch with the leading British growers, will be pleased to render any assistance to those wishing to explore the possibilities of this occupation.

A. G. K.



CLEVELAND ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND

THE Annual Report of this Association contains items of considerable interest quoted in a recent issue of the *Esperanta Ligilo*.

Among the numerous obligations devolving upon this Association is that of securing remunerative employment for the blind in their particular area, and concentrated efforts in this

direction have achieved excellent results. Of the 719 blind persons resident in the City, 229 workers are entirely self-supporting, whilst others are maintained by their respective families. As blindness is often accompanied by additional physical disabilities, many persons are precluded from following any definite branch of employment. The Association is responsible for the organisation of three workshops, the newest and possibly the most interesting of which is devoted to the renovation and upholstering of furniture. The blind workers remove the old varnish, either by a process of washing or by the use of emery paper, and re-polish the article after a fresh coat of varnish has been applied by the sighted helpers. An article of furniture thus renovated presents an entirely new appearance when returned to its owner, and gladdens the eyes of many a housewife.



MISSION TO BLIND CHINESE CHILDREN

A description of Christian mission work, which is conducted among neglected blind children in China, was given by the Rev. J. A. Slimmon of Pekin at a meeting in Glasgow of the National Bible Society of Scotland. He told how the work was begun many years ago by a Glasgow man, William Hill Murray, who, after experience in the slums of his native City, went to China in the service of the Bible Society and soon began to take charge of the training of many helpless blind boys and girls for whom no one had previously cared. The Institute for these blind children in Pekin, which now bears his name, teaches the deserted waifs all manner of useful handicrafts, and, above all, fills them with a love for the Bible and equips them for wide service. He said that as the Chinese are accustomed to allow blind musicians, blind fortune-tellers and blind beggars to have free access to their houses, it is an easy thing for blind evangelists, who can read the Scriptures in Braille, to obtain entrance into the homes of the people. A unique opportunity is thus afforded of spreading the Gospel.



WILL readers please note the new telephone number of the Barclay Workshop, viz., Welbeck 1921. This should be easy to remember, as the address of the Workshop is 19 and 21, Crawford Street, W.1.

THE BLIND IN JAMAICA



It will be remembered that last September we gave an account of the official opening of a School and Library for the Blind in Jamaica. This work has been undertaken by the Salvation Army which is adding to its many humanitarian efforts that of bringing light to the sightless in remote parts of our far-flung Empire.

From the Report sent us by Mrs. Brigadier Ada Barrell we learn that the Army is now in touch with 230 blind people throughout the Island, and that in Kingston 25 students are in attendance at the School. Every week some 200 lessons are given, the subjects including scripture, reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, typewriting, sewing, weaving, cookery, home management and animal and plant life in Jamaica. Much of the teaching given is individual and four pupils are resident.

The Library, which, it will be remembered from the previous account, has to be carefully guarded against the destructive insects of that climate, consists of nearly 300 volumes, including 70 volumes given by the National Institute for the Blind. Also by a special arrangement, books are borrowed from the National Library for the Blind for an extended period. An Association for the Blind has been formed, and has secured the co-operation of 300 friends in the country who give a great deal of help.

It is good to think that those who have hitherto sat in the darkness of ignorance have now been given learning and knowledge. During the year twelve blind people have learned to read, four have learned to write Braille, and one pupil is already earning a small sum through weaving, an occupation which is being taught to several of the scholars. In her final appeal Mrs. Barrell says: "You have heard all that has been said on this work, but

how can we express these things in so few words, or so short a time? Think of a blind boy 16 years of age living in the country part of the Island. He sat in darkness and, mentally, in the shadow of death. Now, I say, he can read and write, and immediately he steps forth from a house in the country into a whole world of literature and thought; from the restrictions



AT THE SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND, KINGSTON, JAMAICA.

of his own mind he now has contact with the greatest thinkers that have ever lived. This is told in one minute, but will it not take all his life to express the Light, Gladness and Hope into which he has come"??

UNION OF COUNTIES ASSOCIATIONS FOR THE BLIND.

Applications are invited for the post of Full-time Secretary.

Candidates must be sighted and state their age (which must not be under 30), qualifications and previous experience (both organising and administrative). Knowledge of work for the Blind, also Shorthand and Typewriting will be an advantage. Salary £300 a year. The Head-quarters of the Union will be in London. Applications in own handwriting, with copies of three recent testimonials to be sent by Tuesday the 19th March, 1929, to—P. M. Evans, Union of Counties Associations, Clothworkers' Hall, Mincing Lane, London, E.C.

NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND

LIST OF ADDITIONS

February, 1929.

FICTION.

	<i>Vols.</i>
Barrington, E. Exquisite Perdita	6
Bashford, H. H. Human Factor	1
Bindloss, H. In the Misty Seas	4
*De la Mare, W. Broomsticks and other tales ...	10
†Fletcher, J. S. Mill of many Windows	3
Galsworthy, John. Beyond	5
Galsworthy, John. Swan Song	5
†Gibbs, Sir P. Reckless Lady	3
†Kaye-Smith, Sheila. Spell-land	3
Montague, C. E. Fiery Particles (Short stories) ...	4
†Oppenheim, E. P. Stolen Idol	3
Priestley, J. B. Benighted	3
†Pryde, Anthony. Spanish Sunlight	3
Rees, Rosemary. Wild, Wild Heart	4
Sabatini, R. Nuptials of Corbal	2
Sutherland, Joan. The Locust	5
Wallace, Edgar. The Squeaker	3
†Waller, Mary E. Deep in the Hearts of Men ...	4
Whitechurch, V. L. Crime at Diana's Pool	4
Williamson, H. Old Stag (Animal Stories)	4
Wyllarde, Dolf. "Our Earth Here" (Short Stories)	5

MISCELLANEOUS.

Church, Richard. Mary Shelley (E. W. Austin Memorial)	2
Earland, Ada. Ruskin and his Circle	4
Findlay, J. J. Child en of England: a contribution to social history and education. (E. W. Austin Memorial)	5
Gilbert, V. Romance of the Last Crusade (Palestine in the Great War)	3
Klickmann, Flora. Shining Way: a little book of Common Sense	2
Lawrence, Sir W. R. The India we Serve (E. W. Austin Memorial)	6
Lodge, Sir O. Why I believe in Personal Immortality ...	2
Lucas, E. V. Encounters and Diversions	2
Lucas, E. V. Life of Charles Lamb (E. W. Austin Memorial)	14
Lynd, Robert. Blue Lion and other Essays	3
Morton, H. V. In Search of England	4
Murry, J. Middleton. Discoveries: Essays in literary criticism	4
*Plato (with introduction by A. D. Lindsay) Five dialogues	4
Ronaldshay, Earl of. India: a Bird's Eye View ...	5
Thompson, Edward. History of India (Benn's Sixpenny Library)	1
*Vallotton, B. (Trans. E. G. Allingham). Patience	2

JUVENILE.

Strang, H. Little Norman Maid	1
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UNCONTRACTED BRAILLE.

Father Tuck. Little People's Annual, 1928 ...	1
*Lang, Jeanie. Stories from Shakespeare, told to the children	2
Steedman, Amy. Birthday Party	1

FOREIGN.

*Ceppi, M. (Compiler). Simple French Stories ...	3
--	---

MOON.

Montgomery, L.M. Anne of Green Gables	7
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* Stereotyped books produced by the National Institute for the Blind.

† Stereotyped books presented by the American Braille Press.

† Stereotyped books produced by West Craigmillar.

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL.

WANTED, a qualified, sighted home teacher for the blind (lady). Salary £160, rising on approved service to £200 per annum by increments of £10 per annum, subject to the provisions of the Local Government and Other Officers' Superannuation Scheme. Candidates must be prepared to undergo a medical examination. Third class travelling expenses will be allowed when on duty. Applications on forms which will be forwarded by the undersigned, must be received not later than March 16th, 1929.

WILLIAM F. J. WHITLEY,
County Medical Officer,
1, Granville Road,
Jesmond,
Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

THE BIRMINGHAM ROYAL INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND.

Owing to the death of the General Superintendent and Secretary, applications for this post are invited immediately. Commencing salary £700. Age not exceeding 45. Knowledge of Blind Work and Trading matters very important. Forms of Application may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, Carpenter Road, Birmingham.

HULL AND EAST RIDING INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND.

General Manager required to take charge of the Workshops, Sales, etc., applicants must not be over 40 years of age. Reply—giving qualifications, experience, salary—to the Institution, addressed to the Hon. Secretary, Beech Holme, Beverley Road, Hull.

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH.

APPOINTMENT OF INSTRUCTOR-FOREMAN AND INSTRUCTOR-FOREWOMAN, WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND.—Applications are invited from qualified persons for appointment as Instructor-foreman in the Basket-making Department and as Instructor-forewoman in the Machine Knitting Department of the Workshops for the Blind, Portsdown, Cosham. The wages will be £3 10 0 per week and £3 0 0 per week respectively. The age of applicants must not exceed 45 years. Applicants for the position of Instructor-forewoman must be experienced in the use of knitting machines, both flat and circular (hand power).

Successful applicants will be required to pass satisfactorily a medical examination, and in the event of the position being designated as an established post for the purposes of the Local Government and Other Officers' Superannuation Act, 1922, will be required to contribute to the Superannuation Fund of the Council established under that Act.

Applications, stating age and giving full particulars of qualifications and previous experience, and accompanied by not more than three recent testimonials, enclosed in sealed envelopes endorsed "Appointment of Instructor-foreman, Basket-making Department" or "Appointment of Instructor-forewoman, Machine Knitting Department" as the case may be, must be received at my office not later than 10 a.m., 14th March, 1929.

Canvassing either directly or indirectly will be a disqualification.

F. J. SPARKS,
Town Clerk.
The Guildhall,
Portsmouth,

19th February, 1929.

The BEACON

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE
INTERESTS OF THE BLIND

VOL. XIII.—No. 148.

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THE APPLICATION OF CHARITY



WE cannot imagine anything more uncharitable than the misapplication of charity. The person who gives with ostentation or for merely selfish reasons, is an alien in the charitable world—a wolf in sheep's clothing who has forged a passport into the fold and frolics as a lamb. But charity's greatest enemy is the person who gives the wrong help in the wrong way. He definitely

harms the object of charity and exposes charity to the criticism of the cynic.

Any handicapped person needs charity of some sort, some kind of sympathetic assistance. If the sympathy is lacking, the assistance loses much of its value, but if assistance is tendered in the wrong way, all of its value is lost.

Judgment and tact should be the inseparable companions of charity. Many a soldier in the War felt inspired to murder when the charitable who lacked judgment and tact fussed over him as a "poor wounded hero." That sort of thing, by all the canons of good taste "isn't done," and yet how often it *is* done!

Tact is inherent or acquired by the imitative faculty. But judgment can only come with experience, and that is why the best way of helping the blind is by following the advice of those who have studied the problem of the blind from every possible aspect. We by no means wish to infer that the blind are problematic because they are abnormal; we mean exactly the opposite. If the blind were abnormal, as a class, they would have marked common characteristics, and they could be

huddled together in groups for philanthropic treatment. In our experience, however, they are the reverse; every blind person is as distinct an individual as every person with sight. To group the blind as an abnormal mass amongst the normal may possibly transform what is merely a physical defect into a psychological defect.

Organized charity has a tendency towards grouping. There is far too much of the attitude which regards a blind man as a "case," and not as a possible statesman or poet without eyesight. Such an attitude is bound to affect the blind person, and he himself may come to regard himself as a "case" and not as a man faced with greater difficulties than the average man and therefore called upon by destiny to make his way with greater strength of character and steadfastness of purpose. Or, possibly, he may become disgusted with charity as help which degrades—which it may do; or as help using his handicap as a stepping-stone to selfish vain-glory—which it may do.

In such ways there arises a party antagonistic to charity within the blind community itself, made up of people unable either through ignorance or bitterness to take advantage of the efforts of sincere sympathizers to help them in overcoming their handicap. These people—and we can understand and sympathise with their point of view—are amongst those who accordingly ask for the "nationalization" of charity and pit themselves against the charitable institutions.

But do they clearly understand what the "nationalization" of charity might mean?

In the first place, all charitable funds are given voluntarily, whereas if the blind claim a right to be supported in some way by the State, the funds necessary for the provision of such support must be contributed by the public under force of law.

In the second place, the administration of subscribed funds under force of law would necessitate the creation of a bureaucracy which, judging from most bureaucracies, might be eminently efficient but would surely be tied down by rigid laws to definite lines of action. It would practically be impossible for the blind to be regarded as handicapped individuals of every type of intelligence, taste and character; the blind man brought up to beg and the blind man who would rather die than beg could scarcely be differentiated to any degree, because officially they would be simply two "cases" of blindness.

Looking at the same question from the point of view of the general public, is it more satisfactory to receive a Government demand to pay so much for the blind which *must* be paid, however distasteful; or to receive from an institution for the blind an appeal for money which *cannot* be paid if it is in any way distasteful? Every donation to a charity is given with free will, whatever the reason which inspires the gift; and most donations are a sign manual of the sympathy of one man for another in the indestructible brotherhood of the world.

The misapplication of charity is indeed charity's greatest enemy. How, then, should charity be rightly applied? The simplest answer is this: Charity is rightly applied if it operates from start to finish in the same spirit which inspires a tramp to give his crust to a poorer tramp and not hand him a recipe for steak pudding or a pamphlet on "How to Reduce the Abdominal Measurements." That is charity employed with judgment.

And if the receiving tramp, somewhat overwhelmed, endeavours to mumble his thanks to the giving tramp and the latter replies with "Garn, chuck it, mate!"—that is charity employed with tact.

The tramp gave to a fellow human being exactly what was needed when it was needed and in the right spirit. Such should be the work and the method of every charitable institution and every charitable individual.

THE EDITOR.

TRAVELLING FACILITIES FOR THE BLIND

THE Ministry of Transport have recently announced that the Railway Companies have agreed to extend the privilege hitherto enjoyed by blind ex-service men travelling for *business purposes* to all blind persons travelling for business purposes.

As from the 1st January, 1929, all blind persons travelling on the railways for business purposes and accompanied by an attendant will be able to obtain the following fare concession: Ordinary tickets or season tickets will be issued between stations in Great Britain at half fare. No less charge will be made, however, than as for one single adult fare for the two persons.

In order to obtain this concession it will be necessary for the blind person to apply to the Headquarters of the Railway Companies for a form of Certificate, which must be completed and witnessed and surrendered to the booking clerk at the railway station from which a ticket is desired. It will be necessary to submit a fresh certificate each time it is desired to make a journey with an ordinary ticket. Where a season ticket is desired application must be made direct to the Headquarters of the Railway Company concerned, and accompanied by a certificate duly completed and witnessed.

The Railway Companies are prepared to consider applications from the various Associations for the Blind for a supply of the form of certificate, but each application will be dealt with on its merits.

The Metropolitan District Railway Company and the London Tube Railways are not prepared to apply the above concession other than to blind ex-service men.

(The term "Headquarters of the Railway Companies" means, of course, the principal offices of the Companies, e.g., Euston, King's Cross, Paddington, and, in the case of the Southern Railway, Victoria Station.)



THREE blind lads in Scout uniform recited the "Scout Law" before a large gathering in the City Y.M.C.A., Belfast, last month, and thereby made a most eloquent plea for the great Youth Movement. The blind reciters, who are attached to the 67th Belfast (Deaf and Dumb) Troop, were accorded an ovation as they were led away by brother Scouts.

PERSONALITIES IN THE WORLD OF THE BLIND

Councillor J. MATHEWSON WATSON, J.P.



WE come now to a life so active, so full of widespread interests, that it is difficult to know where to begin in describing it. The name of John Mathewson Watson is known, not only in the blind world, but in numberless other branches of work on behalf of the community.

A Scotsman by birth, he came to Manchester over twenty years ago, and immediately began to take a great interest in various organisations in the city, especially those connected with social welfare work. During the period of the war he was identified with most of the principal war charities, both local and national. In September, 1914, he raised considerable sums of money for the National Relief Fund and the Local Relief Fund, and he did very extensive work for the British Red Cross Society. He was Honorary Treasurer of the two largest hospitals in the district, Willow Bank Red Cross Hospital and Hartley College Red Cross Hospital, and was instrumental in raising large amounts on their behalf, working with a will to obtain successful results. In connection with his hospital work, apart from the war, it should be mentioned that in 1923, when a special appeal was made to raise two million shillings in order to remove the incubus of debt from the hospitals and infirmaries of Manchester and Salford, Mr. Watson, who was Honorary Secretary and Treasurer of the Fund, by his organising powers and untiring labours, was largely responsible for the result of £75,000, which paid off the various debts

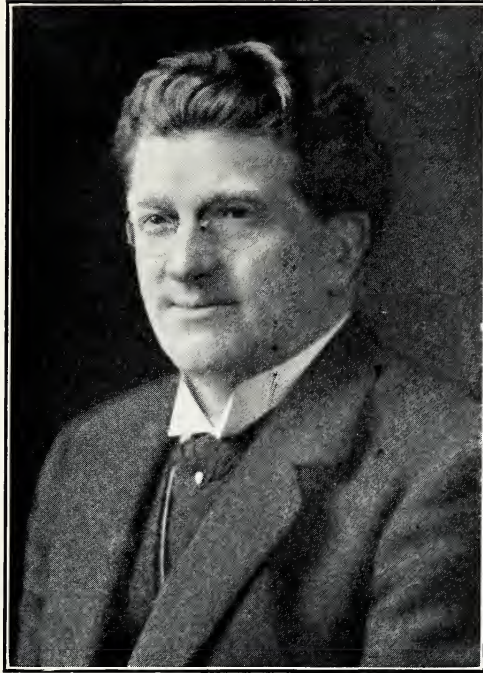
of the hospitals in the cities of Manchester and Salford. He is a Life Governor of the Manchester Royal Infirmary and of the Jewish Hospital in that city.

His war work included the Honorary Treasurership of the Belgian Refugees' Fund and of the Belgian Orphans' Fund. In 1916

he was responsible for obtaining sufficient money to build a recreation hut for the convalescent soldiers at Heaton Park Camp, Manchester. After the inauguration of the King's Fund for the Disabled by the Rt. Hon. John Hodge, Mr. Watson was appointed Honorary Secretary and Treasurer of the Manchester and Salford effort which realised over £70,000, by far the largest amount raised outside London. He was made a National Trustee of the Fund.

Nor does he forget the children of the populous city in which he lives. He has always had their interests at heart, and has for many years been Honorary Secretary of the Sunday School Union Seaside Home at

St. Anne's-on-Sea, where many hundreds of poor boys and girls enjoy the only holiday they have ever known and are given a fresh chance in life. He was responsible for gathering together the funds for this Home, and it was also his initiative and leadership which started what is known as the "White Heather" Fund. The idea of giving a holiday to thousands of poor Manchester children started in a humble way fifteen years ago. A gigantic task it seemed in those early days, but it has grown and grown, and during these years over 500,000 poor children have been given the happiest time of their lives. In order to



COUNCILLOR J. MATHEWSON WATSON, J.P.

give some idea of the scope of this work an account of the outings which took place last year forms interesting reading. In the summer 30,000 children were given a day's pleasuring, whilst 5,000 were given a week at the "White Heather" Camp. The Camp is at Heaton Park, and is equipped with six large army huts and a bungalow, surrounded by pleasant gardens and football and cricket grounds. During the year 4,000 children made a trip down the Ship Canal from Old Trafford Docks to New Brighton, and 30,000 children had a real Christmas treat consisting of a good meal, an entertainment and numerous gifts. These little ones are selected from the poorest districts of Manchester by social workers, day school teachers and attendance officers of the Manchester Education Committee, the only qualification being the need of the child in question. The treats are entirely free, and not a penny is spent on either salaries or wages.

Amongst Mr. Watson's charitable work we must not forget to mention that he was Honorary Secretary of the special effort made in aid of the Young Women's Christian Association, which met with so huge a success, and Honorary Secretary and Treasurer of the Manchester Appeal on behalf of the Prince of Wales' Boy Scouts' Fund. On the occasion of the marriage of H.R.H. Princess Mary, it was decided to open a fund in Manchester and Salford with a view to presenting the Princess with a suitable wedding gift. Of this Fund again he was Honorary Secretary and Treasurer, and the money raised was used for the benefit of the sick poor of Manchester and Salford. He is a Justice of the Peace, and a member of the City Council, representing the Moss Side Division of Manchester, and on the occasion of the last election his majority was the largest in the city. We are sorry to hear that owing to recent indisposition he has been obliged to decline the invitation given him to stand for Parliament for one of the biggest divisions of Manchester at the forthcoming election, especially as it was anticipated that he would head the poll.

To us of the "Beacon" it is of particular interest to record his many years' work on behalf of the blind. When he first started to work for his living, it was in a coal-mine, and his pit pony was blind. This left such an impression upon him that he decided that if ever he had the opportunity he would do all he could for those who cannot see. Sir

Arthur Pearson aroused his interest in the blinded soldiers, and induced him to become Honorary Secretary and Treasurer of his local Fund on their behalf which commenced in Manchester in the early part of 1916. His interest in the cause of the sightless never relaxed. He is a Vice-President and a member of the Council of the National Institute for the Blind and Honorary Treasurer of its Northern Branch. He is Chairman of the Board of Management of Henshaw's Institution for the Blind—the largest in the Provinces. His knowledge of "blind" affairs is extensive, and his advice is often sought and freely given.

In conclusion, we would add the following tribute made by a friend. "Mr. Watson has worked in season and out of season, day and night, week-day and Sunday, since August, 1914, and has spared no effort to help forward all good causes. He has helped any and every object which has been for the benefit of the wounded and disabled soldiers, the charitable institutions of Manchester and Salford, or any effort which has brought sunshine and happiness into the lives of the poorer citizens of this great city. Nothing has ever been too much trouble for him, and he never takes anything up half-heartedly. He never consents to take up a position as Honorary Secretary or Honorary Treasurer merely to be a figure-head. He is a worker. He never spares his energies, but works with a will to benefit or to bring enjoyment to others. He is a man of strong personality and is trusted and loved by all. He believes in the maxim 'if a thing is worth doing, it is worth doing well.' He has been Honorary Treasurer of efforts during the war, and since then, which have resulted in well over three-quarters of a million pounds. I am sure this cannot be said of any other man outside London, and I am quite sure no other man in the country has worked so loyally and well and done his 'bit' without hope of, or desire for, reward."



WE are pleased to say that Mr. Mark N. Lush, a blind Chartered Masseur, and a registered member of the Association of Certificated Blind Masseurs, has been elected to the Committee of the South Devon and Cornwall Institution for the Blind.



THE London Workshops have agreed to charge a uniform rate for pupils' fees of £30 per annum as from April 1st, 1929.

GROUP DISCUSSION OF WIRELESS TALKS

By R. A. RENDALL.

(This article, of exceptional interest to all blind listeners, especially to those resident in Homes or working in Institutions, has been specially written for us by Mr. Rendall of the Adult Education Section of the British Broadcasting Corporation. We shall be very pleased to receive our readers' views on the subject.—Editor).



FOR some time now the B.B.C. has co-operated with the National Institute for the Blind to give such help as it can to blind listeners. Free licences are now available and the programmes are published in Braille. To make this possible the B.B.C. waived its copyright in the *Radio Times* and gives advance information about programme matters as early as possible. Ever since the publication of the Report called "New Ventures" in 1928, thinking people have been realising more and more the vast educational possibilities of broadcasting. The B.B.C. is in close touch with all the most important organisations, and on the recommendation of the Hadow Committee have set up a Central Council for Broadcast Adult Education. This Council consists of representatives of various organisations, as well as nominated members representing various interests which might otherwise have been neglected. It supervises the adult educational programme, and is just starting its work of encouraging broadcast education at the listening end.

It is about this question of the listening end that I want to say something: particularly in regard to group listening and group discussion. Many people must have felt after hearing a talk that interested them, that they would like to discuss various points with other listeners, and out of this feeling there has sprung a growing tendency to form discussion circles in connection with the serial talks. These groups are of every kind and arise in different ways. Some are started by some educational organisation, others by a single enthusiast, others by some quite informal study circle, and others in large institutions such as hospitals or prisons. In some cases the groups have sets easily available, in other cases they arrange to borrow them. The B.B.C. itself has a limited number of sets which it lends to groups who are anxious to make an experiment. In many cases, such groups, finding the experiment successful, have obtained sets of their own and become regular group listeners. Now the

idea of a discussion group is one which attracts many people; but it is an undertaking which requires great care and perseverance and a keenness of more than ephemeral growth. It is necessary to say this, as many discussion groups, started more in the spirit of "What a good scheme!" than of a serious undertaking, have petered out. This is a pity, as it means that a certain number of people are spoilt for an undertaking which deserved to be given a better chance.

I do not want to give the impression that the formation of a wireless discussion group is difficult and laborious, but merely that there are certain important points which must be borne in mind and details that must be considered. Broadly speaking there are four essentials for the successful conduct of a group of this sort: they are (1) a good group-leader, (2) a suitable meeting place, (3) good reception, and (4) co-operation with the B.B.C. Taking these points one by one, the group-leader can make or mar the group; he should be a person with, if possible, some previous knowledge of the subject to be discussed and a real interest in it; he should be prepared to introduce the talk with some general remarks, or better still, with a short résumé of the main points in the previous talks and discussions. After the talk has been heard, he should be prepared to start the discussion, and then to guide and, in some cases, even to push it on to the right paths. Often if a number of individuals are left to discuss a matter in an entirely undisciplined way, they wander from the paths of what is interesting and waste their time on irrelevancies. A skilful leader prevents this, and by tact and manipulation sees that the ultimate conclusions of the discussion are of real value. It is useful, also, if the leader is the member of the group who keeps in touch with the B.B.C., and through them with the lecturer, but on this question of co-operation and correspondence there will be more to say later on.

The question of accommodation resolves itself really into that of comfort and silence. I am assuming here that the group meet

together to listen to the talk and then to follow with discussion. In passing, it should be mentioned that in several cases where a set was not available for group listening, successful results have been attained where members listened individually in their homes and elsewhere, and then followed it up by meeting for discussion sometimes even two or three days later. But to return to our group assembled to listen communally to the talk. They will find that, in order to assimilate fully all that the speaker has to say, extreme concentration is required. For this purpose they must be comfortably seated and in complete silence. Attempts have been made to form a listening group in one corner of a room which contained other people occupied in talking or even in playing billiards; such an attempt is foredoomed to failure. Besides comfort and silence, they should be able to take notes if they wish, as this will ensure that they remember the more important points which they may wish to bring forward in the subsequent discussion.

Thirdly, good reception is absolutely essential. It is often difficult enough to follow a well-packed twenty minutes with the most perfect reception, but if the listener has to expend part of his energies in the mere physical effort of hearing bad reproduction, he will not be getting the best out of the talk. In this connection it is useful to note the assistance which the B.B.C. is prepared to give. There is at Savoy Hill an Educational Engineering Section who are prepared to inspect and give advice on any set which is being used or is going to be used for educational purposes. Besides this the B.B.C. issue specifications for the construction of suitable sets; for these sets it is not claimed that they are better than other sets, but merely that, properly constructed, they should be entirely adequate for educational reception purposes. There is, in fact, no reason why any group should put up with inadequate reception.

Finally there is the question of co-operation with the B.B.C. In the first place this can be effected through the B.B.C. publications; in connection with some of the talks, "Aids to Study" pamphlets are issued which contain a summary of each talk, as well as questions for discussion purposes and lists of books for further reading. In these lists, those books which are printed in Braille or Moontype are starred, owing to the demand for such books which have been received at the N.I.B. Fewer

of these pamphlets are now being issued owing to the publication of the B.B.C.'s weekly *The Listener* which reprints many of the talks, as well as giving advice about reading, etc. *The Listener* costs 2d. weekly and the pamphlets can be obtained from any B.B.C. Station, price 1d. or 2d. post free. Besides this there is the Talks and Lectures Programme issued three times a year, giving details of the talks arranged for each of the Adult Education Sessions. This is supplied free on application, or for 1d. post free, and the Adult Education Section of the B.B.C. keep a register of regular recipients of this programme. In many cases secretaries of organisations or informal bodies take a bulk number of copies for distribution amongst members. In this way groups can keep in touch with the programmes of talks and choose their subjects. Early details about talks series are being sent to the National Institute for the Blind so that a *priceis* may be made and included in the appropriate journals. But equally important is the question of correspondence; it is probable that in the course of discussion questions will crop up on which the group would like to question the lecturer. Such inquiries are welcomed. They should be addressed to the lecturer, c/o the Adult Education Section of the B.B.C., Savoy Hill, W.C.2. Again, it is very desirable that all groups should keep in touch with the Adult Education Section, who are always anxious to help any existing or prospective groups with advice on the conduct of groups, or the choice of a subject. Besides this, reports on the progress of groups and suggestions for future talks and criticisms of present talks are all welcome and of very definite use in programme building. The number of groups who are in touch with the Section are increasing, but it is probable that there are many, probably of the more informal type, who have not made their existence known. The sooner they do so, the better for all parties concerned.

One final word about the most suitable talks for discussion purposes. Obviously the best are the serial talks, which are given on every evening except Saturday and Sunday at 7.25 p.m. for 20 minutes. These are arranged generally in series of six weekly talks—that is to say, they are changed in the middle of each of the three twelve-week sessions. The 7.25 series are all S.B. Besides these there are the half-hour series on Tuesday night at 8.0 p.m. transmitted from Daventry 5XX only. Other serial talks are at 9.15 on Tuesday

evenings—devoted to Sir Walford Davies' well-known talks on "Music and the Ordinary Listener," and the talks arranged in consultation with the National Federation of Women's Institutes at 3.30 p.m. on Wednesday afternoons. Besides these there are the regular talks at 7 o'clock and other lighter series arranged sometimes in the 9.15 periods by the Talks Department.

It is very much hoped that among the many blind listeners some will be found sufficiently keen to undertake the organisation of a wireless listening group on the lines presented above. Anyone proposing to do so should immediately get in touch with the Adult Education Section of the B.B.C. and find out full particulars of forthcoming series of talks.



THE BLIND IN JAPAN

THE blind man and woman are common sights in the streets of Japan, and there must be thousands of them among her population of 68 millions. What is the cause of so much blindness among the Japanese, especially among the poorer classes? It is probably due, at least to a great extent, to the crowded and insanitary conditions in which many people in Japan live, particularly in such great industrial districts as Osaka, Kobe, and Tokyo. The ways the Japanese live and nurse their children in infancy no doubt also contribute to Japan's large number of blind; they heat their rooms by means of a "hibachi," a kind of large bowl made of earthenware, charcoal being burnt. During winter and summer, they sit around this hibachi, bending over it as they read, and all the time warming their hands. But at the same time, the fumes go into their eyes, with the result that eye troubles are very common among Japanese of all classes. In summer it is very hot in Japan; the streets are seldom properly watered or swept, and it is left to the rain to do that. So, as one walks along, during the hot weather, in any street of Japan, one is always apt to get plenty of dust in one's eyes and mouth as well as ears. The foreign resident in Japan knows how to guard against these things, and takes the necessary precautions to safeguard his eyes by wearing coloured glasses and by washing his eyes regularly. The average Japanese, however, minds neither sun nor dust, just as he or she seems to relish the fumes from the "hibachi." The rays of the sun, the eddies of dust, and the charcoal

fumes may not affect the eyes of the Japanese adult so seriously as they are apt to affect those of infants. Japanese carry their infants strapped on the back in a fold of their kimono. Their heads are allowed to fall back, uncovered, and their faces are fully exposed to the rays of the sun as well as to the dust. Many a Japanese child spends the day in this manner, sleeping on the back of its mother or its sister often not much older than itself; its face is seldom washed till it grows old enough to go to the local Public Baths, and its life is spent amidst insanitary surroundings. Twice a year only has every Japanese home to institute a thorough cleaning in the home, for that is the law of the land.

Much of this state of things in Japan is due to ignorance on the part of the masses and to lack of active interest on the part of the local authorities. There are a number of private Societies in Japan who offer their services free for all kinds of helpful work, in order to alleviate and smooth the path of the blind, but there is great need for additional help in the way of more braille publications in Japanese, more medical preventive work, and more statistics regarding the blind. There are at present in Japan about 80 schools for the blind and numerous braille books in English and German. The Tokyo Blind School and that in Osaka are the more important institutions.

The blind man and woman in Japan are continually in the ear if not always the eye of the public; he and she can be seen any time during the day, evening, and late at night, walking in the road, whilst he mournfully blows his bamboo whistle and clanks his iron stick to warn traffic and others of his presence. In all likelihood, he is on his way to a client to relieve pain by massage. That shrill and repeated whistle of the blind in the streets of Japan should be sufficient to remind the Japanese public that more help in the form of social work is needed, but unfortunately it is not, and there is much indifference in Japan, perhaps it is fatalism, in their attitude to the blind.

WALTER BUCHLER.



AT recent meeting of the London County Council, it was decided to make a *per capita* grant to London Workshops of £20 per annum. One of the conditions associated with this grant is that London Workshops will be required to pay a uniform system of augmentation.

THE ATHLONE BLIND SCHOOL

MAY 1927—six children, a seven-roomed house for staff and hostel, an outside class-room and a few outbuildings, with five acres of land.

December, 1928—seventeen children, a spacious school-house, large hostels, a staff house, an up-to-date laundry and store-room, and sixty acres of land.

Such, in a nutshell, is the history of the first effort in South Africa on behalf of the non-European blind. The Athlone Blind School, which is in Faure, S. Africa, mainly owes its origin to the Rev. A. W. Blaxall, who, already actively interested in the deaf and dumb,

added the claims of the blind, and a Committee was formed with Mr. Bowen, who lost his sight in the war, as Chairman. The Superintendent writes: "It is to be doubted if even the most optimistic expected the rapid development that has

taken place in eighteen months, and it is obvious that the Committee have a heavy, withal pleasurable, task in front of them. The seven-roomed house soon proved quite inadequate, and various plans for extension were discussed, and it had almost been decided to build when the present site became available and was secured in June, 1928, a move being made at the end of that month. The fact that suitable buildings were already erected made it possible to admit immediately all the waiting applicants.

"The school curriculum is based, as far as possible, on English lines, and includes also elementary technical instruction in preparation for the workshops which are to be opened immediately, a trade instructor having been added to the staff. When the new applicants arrive, there will be in all 25 pupils, and others

will be added as the Institution becomes better known. The children are drawn from all parts of the Union, the North Transvaal, and the Eastern Provinces, as well as Cape Town and district being represented. They all show the greatest desire to benefit by the opportunities offered them, and we might quote one example of a native boy from Alice who was admitted in November, 1927, knowing no language but Xosa. So keen is he, and so hard has he worked, that he can now read any simple words in English Braille, and he is not the only example. The physique of all has improved wonderfully, and a spirit of independence is noticeable which was entirely

absent on their admittance . . .

"If any readers of the 'Beacon' would like to have further particulars, they should write to the Superintendent, Blind School, Faure, South Africa."



AT THE ATHLONE BLIND SCHOOL, FAURE.

THE BEDFORD EISTEDDFOD

PRIZES in connection with the Prose Reading for Blind Readers held at the Bedford County Musical Festival in March were awarded as follows:—

Gold medal and certificate, Miss Winifred Osborne;

Gold centre medal and certificate, the Rev. H. E. C. Lewis;

Silver medal and certificate, Mr. Reginald Vought.

In judging the Competition, Mr. Acton Bond said that all the competitors had reached a high standard of proficiency.

We understand that a similar contest will be held early in March next year, when it is hoped that there will be a good number of entries.

THE BLIND MAN AS RAMBLER

By J. E. SUTCLIFFE

(Reprinted from The Ramblers' Yearbook, 1929)

THE idea that blind people derive an infinite variety of pleasure from country walks is novel and surprising to those who have not been brought into intimate contact with them.

At the suggestion of one who was frequently my guide and escort during a recent holiday, I have been induced to set down some of my experiences, in the hope that they may be of interest to ramblers in general.

In the first place, there are at least four senses in addition to sight, through which impressions of the outer world are received. Moreover, these senses are interdependent, or complementary. When a friend speaks to you, you instinctively turn your eyes upon him, with the result that the brain receives two impressions—one from the eye and one from the ear. Taste and smell are even more closely linked. In fact, none of these senses is used to its full capacity; and it is only when we lose one of them that we make a strenuous effort to develop those which remain.

Furthermore, to see is not necessarily to observe, for observation is a function of the mind. Pass in mental review the members of your rambling club, and ask yourself if they all derive an equal benefit, and if all are able to observe and interpret the scenes they have witnessed on a given ramble. To some "the primrose by the river's brim" is but a primrose, and nothing more; while to others, who know of Darwin's discoveries of Nature's adaptations to secure cross-fertilisation, it is the most wonderful of our common wild flowers. The power to interpret is the secret of many of the Nature-lover's pleasures.

Given a well-stored mind, a vigorous body, and a companion who has the gift of silence as well as the art of conversation, the blind ramble may experience many joys in a country walk. The two companions should be linked together loosely by means of a short strap held in the hand. This gives free play to the muscles, and permits of the swing of the shoulders and hips. Thus is secured that feeling of exhilaration and that vigour of mind and body that constitute some of the great blessings of tramping.

Even without the running commentary of the companion, much may be gleaned by the blind man of the general nature and detail of the scenery through which he is passing. The rise and fall of the road are obvious, for they involve changes in the breathing and heart-beat. It is easily possible, also, to detect open country after passing through even the smallest woodland, by an increase of sound, and an alteration in the echo of the voice and footfall. One is conscious, too, in a way which is capable of scientific explanation, of passing through a gorge, under a bridge, or even of the difference between a wall and a fence. But perhaps it is the sense of smell which helps the most. Pines, newly-cut grass, freshly-turned turf, and many other common things of the countryside, are easily located by their characteristic odour. A little practice, too, enables one to identify, by the sense of touch, the common forest trees, and the larger wild flowers.

One must resist the temptation to overstate the case, but there are one or two positive advantages in being unable to see. Familiarity will never breed contempt in the mind of the true Nature-lover, but the edge of his delight is dulled by the constant repetition of the inevitably-restricted walks during the days of the working week, and he is always conscious of the ugly posters along the road, and the chimney-stack which stabs the sky on the horizon. But I give to my daily walks an infinite variety, drawn from my store of memory pictures. On my imaginary roads, there are no ugly posters, petrol pumps, or places where rubbish may be shot, nor is my mental horizon marred by factory chimneys. I may endow my companion with a beauty which he does not possess; but it pleases me, and flatters him not a little. One of my blind friends derives a great deal of physical benefit from imaginary sea-breezes in the London park close to his home. On windy days, when miniature waves from the lake lap the promenade, he takes a piece of dried seaweed, immerses it in the water, hangs it on the arm of the bench where he sits, and inhales the ozone! The same ingenious man tells me that he can reach the fountains of Versailles by 'bus from his home, at the cost of twopence, for fountains

in a London park speak the same language as do those in Paris!

It was my privilege four years ago to join a large party, representative of the Rambling Clubs of London, in a visit to the beautiful Hatfields Forest, near Bishop's Stortford, in Essex. This has now been acquired by the National Trust, through the generosity and active interest of several members of the Buxton family. Many centuries ago, the greater part of Essex was covered by forest, of which there remain three widely-separated fragments. One of these, Epping, was bought for the nation long ago. Hainault was acquired later; and now the third and last section has come into our hands. Roughly, it comprises 800 acres of forest, in which the hornbeam and specimen-oaks are abundantly evident, in addition to open glades, coppices, an extensive lake, and all the beautiful accompaniments of sylvan scenery. In a glade of the wood we forgathered to hear a warm expression of thanks to Mr. Buxton from Mr. Chubb, whose long service in the preservation of the countryside is so deservedly well known. To this, Mr. Gerald Buxton replied with characteristic modesty. Then followed some glorious unaccompanied male-voice singing by members of the South London Choral Society, which was the means of evoking a never-to-be-forgotten demonstration. Great numbers of birds, attracted by the unusual music, congregated in the trees around the glade, and in an interval of the concert broke into a magnificent chorus. They may have been singing with the choir; but it was only when the men ceased to sing that the birds' song could be heard. No one present could fail to be struck with what seemed to me to be the finest tribute that Mr. Buxton could have. It seemed as though the birds were aware of their new-found security, and were overjoyed at the thought.

Within a radius of 20 miles of London, the face of the country has changed out of recognition within recent years. Here, where I have the good fortune to live, at the gateway to the Chilterns, Greater London has laid its grimy hand. It is still beautiful; but the nightingale, for which the district was famous ten years ago, has retreated, while the rabbit and the hedgehog maintain a precarious existence. Thanks, however, to the growing alarm of all country-lovers, the County Councils in and around London are well on the move with suggestions for maintaining

green zones at regular intervals around the ceaselessly-growing metropolis. It is the eleventh hour, but not yet too late; and we, to whom the country brings healing calm and intense joy, must give our whole-hearted support to all such efforts, realising that upon their success the vigour of the rising generation must largely depend.



NORTHERN COUNTIES'

ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND

THE Northern Counties' Association for the Blind have removed their offices to Deansgate House, 274, Deansgate, Manchester, and ask that all communications should be sent to this address in future. The telephone number is Central 1039.

The Executive Committee of the Association have accepted the resignation of their Secretary, Mrs. N. M. Brooks, on her approaching marriage, and have appointed as her successor Mrs. Ida M. Cowley, widow of Mr. R. G. Cowley, the late Superintendent of the Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind. Mrs. Cowley will take up her duties as from April 1st, 1929.



NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND

E. W. AUSTIN MEMORIAL READING COMPETITION

THE Ninth Meeting of the E. W. Austin Memorial Reading Competition will be held at the National Library on Saturday, May 4th. Intending competitors should consult the March issues of the magazines for full particulars, and should send in their names to the Secretary, 35, Great Smith Street, S.W.1, as soon as possible.



Mr. FREDERICK DELIUS

WE offer our congratulations to Mr. Frederick Delius, the blind composer, whose name figures in the New Year Honours list as a Companion of Honour.

Born at Bradford in 1863, he won his first recognition in Germany while composing the incidental music for Flecker's play, "Hassan," produced in London in 1923. He is now one of England's greatest musical geniuses.

"DICTATION"

AS a blind man I have written much at dictation, and as an examiner of Braille I have seen much that has been written by others. May I, therefore, offer a few hints suggested by my sufferings!

Writing from dictation is a far more serious matter to the blind than to the seeing. The blind man depends upon it for indispensable material, notes, extracts, patterns, etc. He may often find a reader, but seldom a copyist.

Both reader and writer must remember that their performance is a duet, and that want of mutual understanding means disaster. Both must be patient and attentive, and must avoid doing anything to distract or irritate the other.

The reader should get into a comfortable position where the light is good. To avoid the strain of glueing his eyes on the last word, it is often well to hold a pencil or paper-knife below it to avoid losing the place when resting the eyes. Nor must he forget that the writer has not seen the text, and is probably too busy writing to keep the sense of the passage in mind. He must read clearly, not without due emphasis—for that is necessary to the understanding of spoken English—but bring out the little words such as "a," "and," "of," "with," more clearly than he would in ordinary conversation. He should not read too many words at once, though this depends on the nature of the sentence and the capacity of the writer. A frequent snag is the final "ed" which should always be made a separate syllable.

Obviously, the writer must be told of all punctuation, paragraphing, centralising, and quotations, whether these last are shown by inverted commas or by a change in the size of type, and should be duly warned of unusual spelling, the use of numerals, abbreviations, etc. The majority of the mistakes found in examination papers sent in by blind writers is evidently due to want of clearness in the reader's enunciation, or to his failure to spell difficult words or to describe exactly the printed copy.

To the writer I would say, keep your attention on the work. Try to follow the sense of what you are writing, as this will save you from many errors. Help the reader by warning him if he reads too fast or too slowly, and have the courage to ask him to spell any word about which you may be for the moment uncertain, and to explain anything that you do

not fully understand. Get him, if you can, to describe the print, especially if there is anything unusual about it, so that you may fully understand what is meant and be able later to help other and perhaps less competent readers.

Remember that the art of writing from dictation accurately and quickly will be of the greatest use in life, and the better you can do it the easier you will find it to get friends interested in reading for you.

Warn the reader when you have to change paper or have to stop writing for a moment, so that he may rest his eyes.

All dictated work should be carefully checked page by page, and *all* mistakes noted and corrected at once.

W. PERCY MERRICK.



HANDWRITING FOR THE BLIND

SHOULD blind people learn to use ordinary handwriting and communicate in this way with friends who can see? The question has recently been put forward, and we learn that experiments have already been made with successful results. We should be glad to hear from our readers whether they consider the idea a useful one.



THE Thermetallic Thermometer is a scientific temperature-indicating instrument of recent invention. The controlling element being made entirely of a non-corroding metal, it will last indefinitely and maintain accurate temperature. The thermometer measures seven inches in diameter, and the readings on the dial are in Braille characters and can be read by a blind person without the least difficulty. The price of the instrument, which is obtainable at the National Institute for the Blind, is 12s. 6d. exclusive of postage.



ON her retirement from the post of Lady Superintendent at Linden Lodge School, Miss M. M. R. Garaway, F.C.T.B., was presented with a wireless set and a handsomely upholstered easy chair, together with an address and a list of the names of the subscribers. Several appreciative speeches on her excellent work for the School were made by friends. The presentation took place at the School for the Blind, Swiss Cottage.

OBITUARY

Miss E. C. STONE

WE record with deep regret the death, following an operation, of Miss E. C. Stone, who was attached to the Royal Midland Institution for the Blind, Nottingham, as a Home Teacher, and was a sister of Mr. G. V. Stone, formerly Secretary of the South Yorkshire Branch of the National Institute for the Blind. She will be very greatly missed by the blind people whom she visited, for her tact and sympathy were as great as was her knowledge of their interests.

At the early age of seventeen she began to take an active part in work for the sightless. Residing in Leeds at the time, she helped to secure free tram-rides for the blind of that town. She was a familiar figure at all the Branch meetings of the National League of the Blind held in Leeds for several years, encouraging the blind girls to take an active interest in their own industrial affairs. In 1917 she became associated with the work of the Blinded Operatives Department of the National Institute for the Blind. As the work of the Yorkshire Branch increased, her responsibilities developed, and she eventually became Assistant Secretary and Cashier of the South Yorkshire Branch at Sheffield. Here she was much liked and respected by both blind and sighted members of the staff. Family reasons compelled her to relinquish the position in 1925, but she again resumed work for the blind community in October, 1927, when she became Home Teacher at Nottingham.

We express our sincere sympathy with her brother in his very sad loss.

* * * *

Mr. JOHN HODGKINSON

WE regret to record the death of Mr. John Hodgkinson, Honorary Treasurer of the National Union of Organists' Associations, who passed away on Friday, February 22nd, at Thornton Hough, Cheshire. Mr. Hodgkinson took a deep interest in the musical work of the National Institute for the Blind, especially in the "National Institute's Edition of the Works of British Blind Composers" and in the "Captain Towse Christmas Carol Effort," using his influential position, as a high official of the National Union of Organists' Associations, to draw the attention of organists and musicians generally to the musical work of the Institute.

The loss of his advocacy and practical assistance during the Braille Centenary year is incalculable.

* * * *

Mr. JOHN E. WEST, F.R.C.O. F.R.A.M.

THE National Institute's Music Consultative Committee has again suffered a severe loss, this time by the death of Mr. John E. West, F.R.C.O., F.R.A.M., at the age of 66. Mr. West passed away suddenly, on the evening of February 28th, at a concert at which he was conducting the famous London Railway Clearing House (male-voice) Choir, in the Central Hall, Westminster.

He had recently retired from the position of Musical Editor to Messrs. Novello & Co., a post he had held with consummate ability for many years. As a composer of Church and Organ Music he is known throughout the Empire, and his vast experience and ripe judgment were always at the service of the National Institute. Several of his compositions, and many of his organ "arrangements" (a type of work in which he excelled), are in the Institute's Braille Music Catalogue, and thus permanently available for blind students and musicians.

The funeral service at Marylebone Parish Church, on March 7th, was noteworthy, the music being rendered by the Choir of the Church, with the addition of the Railway Clearing House Choir, the members of which attended to pay this last tribute of respect to a great musician and a most lovable man. This took the form of an impressive rendering of Mendelssohn's unaccompanied Motet for Male-Voice Choir: "For ever blessed are they which die in the Lord." As a music consultant to the National Institute, Mr. West will be difficult to replace.



MR. THOMAS SHARROCK of Pember-ton, Wigan, more familiarly known as "Blind Tommy," has died at the age of 82. Although he was born blind, he worked in a mine for over thirty years, and never met with an accident. So familiar was he with all the workings in the Pemberton Colliery, that he was frequently deputed to act as guide to miners new to the pit.

HOME OCCUPATIONS FOR THE BLIND

GARDENING

"Who loves a garden, still his Eden keeps."



These notes are being written, the gracious sunshine of a premature spring is gently freeing mother earth from the icy grip which has held her in thrall for so many weeks; and the gardener, his enforced idleness over, is getting out his tools, ordering his seeds, and making preparations for the busy time which lies immediately ahead, for the spring is the gardener's busiest season. By the time this article appears in print, garden work will be in full swing, but it will not be too late for the beginner to make a start, particularly if his land is in a good state of cultivation.

A broad interpretation can be given to the term gardening, and the enthusiast who has only a Japanese rock garden in a bowl, or maybe a window-box or two, can have his share of the pleasures of gardening. Its appeal to something inherent in our common humanity is irresistible and universal; it revives sweet memories of childhood; and it provides for the sightless a much-needed physical, mental, and spiritual outlet that cannot fail to be beneficial. Mr. Arthur Trower, owner of the famous "Wiggie" gardens at Redhill, refers in his book "Our Homestead" to a totally blind lady who performs unaided all the work usually undertaken by a lady gardener; a totally blind man known to the writer is quite an expert gardener; and one has only to look through the report of the Guild for Promotion of Gardening amongst the Blind and Partially Blind to be convinced that lack of sight is not an insurmountable barrier to the would-be cultivator of the soil.

The organization just referred to was formerly known as the Guild of Blind Gardeners; its address is that of the National Institute for the Blind, 224 Gt. Portland Street, London, W.1; and its work comes under two categories, namely, the instruction of blind and partially blind children, and the enrolment of members whom it assists in various ways. To the home gardener who becomes a registered member, the Guild supplies seeds,

bulbs, and other requisites at a reduced price, and gives skilled advice as to how gardening can be made a lucrative pastime. The Guild makes arrangements annually to enable registered members to exhibit at the following shows, at which prizes are awarded by the Guild: The Royal Horticultural Society's Show, Chelsea; The National Rose Society's Show, Chelsea; and the North of England Horticultural Society's Show, Harrogate. Particulars as to membership fee, etc., can be obtained from the Secretary, Major P. H. Short, D.S.O. A small gardening booklet in braille and inkprint is issued by the Guild.

Since the Romans first introduced the art to this country, gardening has been a national occupation, and information on the subject can readily be obtained. In addition to the large amount of literature dealing with every conceivable kind of gardening, from the growing of a box of mustard and cress to the cultivation of the rarest orchids, many useful hints can be picked up in conversation with friendly neighbours. For example, the writer got the following in this way, and passes it on, as it seems a splendid idea for blind and partially blind gardeners. With seed such as onion, mix a small proportion of radish seed. The radishes, being quick growers, will spring up above the onions or other slower growing plants, and thus serve as guides to the positions of the rows, so that weeding can be carried out without injury to the plants. Doubtless there are many other "tips" which will be similarly useful.

The chief "raw material" with which the gardener has to deal is the soil, the main constituents of which are clay and sand in varying proportions. If these two elements are about equal, the soil will be "loamy," the best soil for general gardening. If it is too light, *i.e.*, having an undue proportion of sand, it is improved by the addition of dried and powdered clay, meal, and farmyard manure. If, on the other hand, it contains too much clay, and is, in consequence, heavy, the addition of sand, ashes, lime, gritty road scrapings, or old mortar will greatly improve it. The presence in the soil of what is known as

humus, *i.e.*, decayed animal and vegetable matter, is an absolute essential to plant life, and this is ensured by the periodical manuring of the garden. Unless this is done, the crops will be but poor. The cultivation of the soil by digging, hoeing, and the like, is also important, as well as the extermination of weeds and insect pests.

Most readers will be familiar with the tools used by the gardener, the principal ones being the spade, fork, hoe, and rake. A suitable line or cord for ensuring straightness in digging, planting, etc., will be an important item of equipment.

In the writer's quarter of an acre of garden, the last of the Brussels sprouts are waiting to be picked, the brocoli is coming on well, and a bed of spring cabbage has fortunately survived the exceptionally sharp winter. By the end of the month the bulk of the seeds will, it is hoped, have been sown. Nor is the flower garden to be overlooked. Bulbs of many kinds are in the earth, and the sweet peas have been planted, together with flower seeds of other kinds. The miracle of recreation will shortly happen again to gladden the heart of mankind.

Gardeners, it is said, are born, but to some extent at least they are "made" also—and the "making" is not always easy. But, as Kipling says, "when your back stops aching and your hands begin to harden, you'll find yourself a partner in the glory of the garden." And the reward which comes to the gardener who has been faithful to his trust is indeed a glorious one. Not the least important part of this reward is that which enriches the mind and spirit. In a garden, victorious life may be seen springing from decay and death, and reaching upward to the sun. Here, if anywhere, the soul can make contract with its Creator, so that the garden becomes a veritable Garden of Eden—a garden where God walks.

A. G. K.



THE Annual Birthday Party of the British and Foreign Bible Society took place at the Guildhall, London, last month. The customary birthday cake was a conspicuous feature of the celebration. The Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress, with the Sheriffs, attended in state. Portions of Scripture were read very beautifully by two blind students from the Royal Normal College for the Blind, Upper Norwood.

VOLUNTARY BLINDNESS INSURANCE IN SWITZERLAND

The following is an extract from a lecture by Dr. H. Peyer, given at a Conference of German Institutions for the Blind, at Königsberg, August 2nd, 1927).

IN Switzerland insurance against blindness was first re-introduced by the 'Allgemeine' Insurance Company. Every kind of blindness is insured against, it being immaterial whether it is the result of an accident, disease, or any other cause. By the payment of only a single premium of, say, 40 francs, anyone, young or old, can become insured for life for 5,000 francs against blindness in both eyes. Blindness here not only means complete loss of sight, but includes any diminution of sight equivalent in its economic effect to complete blindness. By the payment of an additional premium, blindness in one eye can be insured against for one quarter of the sum claimable for complete blindness. Higher sums can of course be insured for, up to a maximum of 100,000 francs.

The mathematical basis of this new branch of insurance, particularly the calculation of the premiums, and the reserve funds of the Insurance Society, has been made from detailed statistical and administrative inquiries and calculations by prominent oculists and mathematicians. These calculations have been checked and passed by the 'Eidgenössisches Versicherungsamt.'

This blindness insurance in Switzerland is said to be very popular, particularly as the insurance lasts for life and there is only one premium to pay. Until recently, however, it was so far incomplete that persons with only one eye who mostly need the protection of such insurance, could not avail themselves of it. This defect was keenly felt by many one-eyed persons and the 'Allgemeine Versicherungsgesellschaft' of Berne by arrangement with the Eidgenössisches Versicherungsamt, has now decided to extend their blindness insurance to one-eyed people. An essential condition is that the one eye shall be sound. The terms of insurance are the same for those with only one eye as for those with both, and in particular the sum insured for can be claimed not only in the case of total blindness, but even when the sight of the insured person is only so far gone that he cannot see to count the fingers of a hand held out in front of him in a good light at a distance of two metres. Further, it

is immaterial in the case of those with only one eye, as of those with two, whether the blindness be due to accident or disease.

The single premium which lasts for life amounts, in the case of one-eyed persons, to 2½% of the sum insured for. Further, it should be noted that only 5% of the sum insured for can be claimed if the blindness arises after the insured person is seventy, and that persons under two and over sixty cannot be insured.

There is thus voluntary blind insurance in Switzerland, and the poorer classes do not trouble about it on account of the premium to be paid.



THE periodical "Everyman" recently awarded a prize for a short story told in twenty-six words arranged in alphabetical order. There were hundreds of entries, and we are pleased to be able to record that the prize was divided between a blind worker at the National Institute for the Blind, Miss Cissie Till, and Mr. R. H. Lloyd Jones of Ealing. Miss Till's entry runs as follows:—

"A bad case. Doctor entered from Guy's Hospital. In jiffy knowledge located malady. *Native overfed.* Protuberance (quite round) showed the indigested victuals when X-raying young Zulu."



L T.-COL. T. R. JOLLY, Chairman of the Fulwood Homes for the Blind, Preston, celebrated his 80th birthday in February, and an illuminated address was presented to him on behalf of the children, trainees, workers and staff of the Homes. Colonel Jolly has filled his position as Chairman for 55 years, and it was only fitting that Miss Whittle, who, it will be remembered, completed 50 years' service for the Homes last year, should be the one to make the presentation. In thanking the kind donors, Colonel Jolly said that there was no memento he would treasure so greatly as the one he had received that evening.



The Royal Society of Edinburgh has awarded the Makdougall-Brisbane Prize to Dr. William Ogilvy Kermack for his contributions to chemistry. Dr. Kermack is blind.

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NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the TWELFTH ELECTION to this SCHOLARSHIP will take place on 12th June, 1929. Candidates must send in applications so as to reach Clothworkers' Hall not later than Saturday, 20th April next.

The Scholarship, which is of the annual value of £50, will be awarded to a deserving blind person or persons so far deprived of sight as to need to use his or her fingers for reading, and will be tenable for a maximum period of four years at any of the Universities of the United Kingdom, including Women's Colleges at such Universities.

Candidates must be between the ages of 17 and 23 at the time of the election. Forms of application and further particulars can be obtained from the Clerk to the Clothworkers' Company.

Qualified and eligible candidates will be required to attend for examination at Clothworkers' Hall, of which due notice will be given to them.

Clothworkers' Hall, Mincing Lane,
London, E.C. 3.

15th March, 1929.

NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND

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* Stereotyped books produced by National Institute for the Blind.

† Stereotyped books produced by West Craigmillar.

‡ Presented by the Guild of Church Braillists.

ADVERTISEMENTS

"THE BLIND."

Will any one having a spare copy of Volume V., No. 87, of this magazine, which was published by Mr. Henry J. Wilson, Secretary, Gardner's Trust for the Blind, kindly communicate with the Hon. Registrar, College of Teachers of the Blind, 224-6-8, Great Portland Street, London, W. 1.

Home Teacher (sighted female) **required**—with experience in the work and preferably holding the Home Teacher's certificate. Salary according to qualifications. Applications stating fullest particulars to be sent to the Secretary, Institution for the Blind, Wolverhampton.

The BEACON

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE
INTERESTS OF THE BLIND

VOL. XIII.—NO. 149.

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WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND



THE recently issued Report of the Conference of Blind Workshop Representatives, held at the National Institute last January, should be useful to all concerned in the employment of blind labour. Its main value is its evidence that, in spite of the great diversity of conditions in different localities, certain broad principles of accounting, general management, salesmanship and co-operation may be applied with good effect in every workshop.

It seems extraordinary that there should be any difficulty in the general adoption of a more or less uniform system of trading accounts. It is obvious that the Ministry of Health cannot properly analyse the conditions surrounding the employment of the blind—a most necessary function in the successful operation of the Blind Persons Act—unless it is able to examine financial results on fixed bases of comparison. A definite form of accounts is prescribed by the Ministry, and there is really no reason why there should be any departure from this form. Or if there is, it has never been adequately expressed.

It is equally obvious that a distinction should be made between business and non-business factors. In some cases it is difficult to decide which are which, but every workshop for the blind has its “charitable” side and its “business” side fairly well defined. Trainees, for example, are clearly distinct from workers earning a wage, and the economic position of a workshop can never be advantageously

demonstrated unless there is a rigid division between the two.

The application of a definite costing system in workshops appears to be another almost elementary feature of any selling organization. Whether an article is sold for a profit or at a loss—embossed books, for instance—it is essential that the selling price should bear a constant relation to the actual cost of production. The latter, apparently, is not always based on sound business principles. There is perhaps a tendency in some charitable organizations to mix “charity” considerations even in such strictly business matters as estimating cost of production and value of stock, in fixing overhead charges, and drawing up a profit and loss account. We thoroughly endorse the belief expressed at the Conference by Mr. Lovett, of the Ministry of Health, that “the separation of the business factors of the work from the purely humanitarian and benevolent factors would lead to a far more efficient and successful state of affairs.”

The interesting questions of the proportion of sighted to blind labour in workshops, and the sale of goods other than those made by the blind, provoked general discussion. Both matters are mainly “local,” and the methods adopted in one industry might not be applicable to another. One rule, however, we believe should apply everywhere: the amount of sighted labour and the quantity of goods made entirely by sighted labour should always be kept strictly at a minimum, with due regard to the efficiency of the workshop in employing blind labour to the best advantage of the

employee and in producing goods to the best advantage of the customer.

To be marketable, goods must always be of an uniform high standard. It is that standard which is going to sell them, and a satisfactory standard should be recognized by trade mark. Goods approved by the guilds of merchants in the great mediaeval markets of Flanders—Ypres, Ghent and Bruges—were above criticism throughout the world, from Gibraltar to China, Novgorod to Egypt. We should like to see the trade mark of goods made by the blind equally far-reaching and unimpeachable as a criterion of excellence in value and workmanship, and we hope that this matter will be one of the first considerations of the new Association of Workshops for the Blind.

The paper and discussion on salesmanship were full of interesting points. We think that while the fact that goods are made by the blind is an excellent selling point, it should be used with judgment. The major selling point should be the quality of the goods; the fact that they are made by the blind is just that extra inducement which directs the choice of a customer to one out of two lines of goods of equal quality. If the quality of the goods is excellent then it naturally follows that every possible publicity device, such as up-to-date and attractive catalogues, price lists, advertisements, etc., should be used in bringing goods made by the blind before the public. In such announcements, the goods themselves should occupy the first place. We do not believe that a catalogue should be an appeal to charity. The appeal should be judiciously suggested rather than definitely phrased. That goods are made by the blind may often be the deciding factor in effecting a sale, but it should arise naturally within a customer's mind.

If goods are not up to a standard quality, then salesmanship is of very little use. The public often have inferior articles foisted upon them by elaborate publicity, but it is a dishonest policy which must never be employed by organisations depending largely upon public generosity. We believe that it is equally bad policy, in the long run, to sell an article made by the blind of inferior quality or at an uncompetitive price merely because it is made by the blind. Doubtless customers may be found for such articles, but their inferiority is a slur against the general high standard of goods made by the blind and can leave no lasting impression other than unfavourable on the purchaser, however charitably minded he or she may be.

It is evident from the Report that many blind industries are faced with keen competition from sighted industries. Some workshops welcome it, others fear it. If there is competition between goods of equal quality and equal price, it is simply a matter of salesmanship, and is always stimulating and healthy; but if there is competition between goods of equal quality but unequal price or goods of equal price but unequal quality, it is almost bound to be disastrous to one competitor. This difference of conditions probably accounts for the difference of opinion.

One type of competition should, in our opinion, be avoided by all workshops for the blind, that is, competition between themselves. On the contrary, there should be co-operation all along the line, and we hope that the Association of Workshops will be the means of creating it. Business methods of workmanship, salesmanship, advertising, costing, pricing, etc., are all sufficiently elastic to embrace in the sphere of their influence different local conditions, and we assume that the great object of the Association will be to formulate or exchange such methods.—THE EDITOR.



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PERSONALITIES

IN THE WORLD OF THE BLIND

MR. ERNEST KESSELL

("E. K.")



HE subject of our present biography says that he ought to have ended his existence at the age of seven, when an infuriated cow chased, caught and badly mauled him, leaving him on the ground as of no further use. But he got over it, and in the early 'eighties commenced business life on the *Cornish Telegraph*, a weekly paper published at Penzance, where he gained technical knowledge of

the printing trade which, he says, has been useful throughout his life.

Whilst in that office, he made up his mind to learn shorthand, but in those days there were no teachers in so distant a part of the country, and so he had to rely upon what help he could get from a reporter to get him over his difficulties with little troubles such as vowels. His method of acquiring shorthand was rather curious. In one way and another he put in an hour every day studying it. If he could not give the complete hour straight off, he would study for half an hour early in the morning and perhaps two separate quarters of an hour during the day; or perhaps the hour might be split up during the day into four quarters. When he was getting along and it became a question of speed, he would go to Church or Chapel and endeavour to take down the sermons. At first, of course, he did not succeed in doing this, but the practice was good, and in due course he was able to tackle anything. Owing to this method of learning shorthand, he says he has never forgotten it, and to-day frequently makes notes of things of which he wants a record.

Whilst on this paper he was sometimes called upon to report minor meetings and functions, and well remembers one day being sent to report something more important in the nature of an inquest upon a man who had committed suicide by cutting his throat with a razor! Being a mere lad, and not yet having commenced to shave, the sight of the exhibits made such an impression upon him that he has never forgotten the experience.

In January, 1885, he came to London and went into a slate merchant's office at Chelsea. Of this fresh experience he says:

"How well I remember that journey when the train took twelve hours for a distance now covered in six and a half hours. Broad gauge trains, unknown in these days, were run on the Great Western Railway then. There were no corridors, no heating appliances, no refreshment cars, none of the present-day accommodation, and the light came from an oil-lamp in the centre of the roof. Twelve hours on a cold January day!"

Three months later he obtained a small position on *Tit-Bits*, the pioneer paper of that



MR. ERNEST KESSELL.

class of literature. It had then been in existence about three and a half years, and was making a fortune for its proprietor, Mr. George Newnes, afterwards Sir George. It was here that he first came into touch with Arthur Pearson, then a lad just two years older than himself, who had, a few months earlier, obtained a post on the staff at a salary of £100 as a prize for answering a series of questions upon general subjects. Incidentally, it was in this office that he first saw a typewriter, which

at that time was a great novelty. He wrote at the time to a friend, describing it, saying :

"It is not a press like a printer's, but a lot of keys with letters on, and whatever letter you want you must strike a key and a letter will appear on the paper—the paper being passed around a roller."

Mr. Kessell tells us that that very letter was recently shown to him by the friend to whom he wrote it in 1885. It was in *Tit-Bits'* office also that he met his wife—Miss Emmie Keary, sister of the late Peter Keary, author of "Get On or Get Out" and other books of the kind.

Five years were spent on the staff of *Tit-Bits*, when one day young Pearson returned from his summer holiday, and imparted to him the great secret that he had found a man with money to invest in a business and, therefore, he was going to start a weekly paper on his own. He induced Kessell to join him, and he was thus the first one engaged for the staff of *Pearson's Weekly*, as the paper was to be named—the first number of which appeared in July, 1890. He was Secretary of the Company from 1890 until the end of 1899, by which time Mr. Pearson's great desire was to possess a daily paper. Again he was asked to help him with this new venture, and thus once more Kessell was the first member of the staff of another great publication, the *Daily Express*, the first number of which appeared in April, 1900.

The work in the early days was very hard, meaning fourteen or fifteen hours a day for about eighteen months. Fortunately, he had a good constitution and was able to stand it. The time arrived, however, when his duties changed, and another took over the work he had been doing. It proved too much for him after two or three months, and Mr. Pearson told Kessell that it was necessary to make two "shifts" of the job, so that his successor should not work so many hours, otherwise his health would break down. Kessell reminded him of what he had been doing, and he said, "Ah, *you* can stand it but *he* can't." "I have never," says Mr. Kessell, "been able to make up my mind whether that was a compliment or not—but I suppose it was! . . . Those days were thrilling. I discovered there was always something to be done; always somebody to know; always somebody to meet. In fact, in a newspaper office one feels at the hub of the world, for news of happenings and events flow in from all parts of the world. In the course of my long connection with

Fleet Street I made hundreds of friends, and those who are still living give me the heartiest of welcomes whenever, for a brief period, I return to the old haunts of newspaperdom, which are, and always will, feel to me to be part of myself."

Though frequently assisting with the news side, his occupation was actually on the managerial side, for he was Secretary of the *Daily Express, Limited*, and also of about half-a-dozen subsidiary companies which were formed in connection with offshoots of the *Express* in several of the large provincial towns of England, such as Leicester, Birmingham, Manchester, Newcastle-on-Tyne, etc. This necessitated a good deal of travelling, and so not only did he make friends in London, but he gained a large number of journalistic friends in the foregoing towns.

This position he held from 1900 until the early days of the Great War, when blinded soldiers began to arrive back in this country from the War Front. Here, indeed, was a job to be done, and when Arthur Pearson set about organising a hostel for blinded soldiers and sailors at St. Dunstan's, he again asked Mr. Kessell for his assistance. Resigning his position in Fleet Street, after having been with the printing trade for thirty-two years, he joined him in his great work—much to his gratification.

From the first it was a matter of increase and reorganising and building at short notice, and Arthur Pearson relied upon him to see that what was required for the increasing population of blinded men was provided. It must be remembered that the supply of able-bodied men was getting less and less as the war proceeded, and it was no easy task in those days to get building materials, stocks of raw materials, food, transport, etc., for all things in due time were rationed by the Government Departments, and this rationing became more difficult week by week as the war went along on its long-drawn-out career.

At one period there were over seven hundred blinded men under the roofs of St. Dunstan's and its annexes, and yet there was nothing lacking for their comfort in the way of housing and food and training, for, though everybody in every department had enormous difficulties to attend to, the Government authorities were as kind as they possibly could be, and saw to it that supplies were forthcoming for the men who had given so much for their country. As Arthur Pearson's chief lieutenant, a lot of the

responsibility to see that matters went along as smoothly as circumstances would permit fell upon Mr. Kessell's shoulders. The staff was composed chiefly of exempted men or men who had "done their bit" and were discharged. There was also a very large staff of nurses and V.A.D.'s, as well as women clerical assistants. His position was that of General Superintendent and Treasurer. The office carried great responsibility, for all matters financial and of general organisation came under his supervision and direction, and it was said of him that "the success and smooth working of the Hostel in the early days, when matters became more and more difficult, were due to his energy and disposition." He also arranged hundreds of concerts and entertainments for the men, and created an air of happiness and general goodwill amongst them and also amongst the staff.

Many people have been, and are, under the impression that to be in contact with so many men who were so tragically blinded is one of the most depressing occupations to be met with. But this is not Mr. Kessell's view. He says that in all his experience he has never met a more cheery, happy lot of fellows—young men who were just entering upon real life when they were deprived of their sight—older men who had seen something of the world. And yet these men were—and are—always ready to make a joke or to turn a remark into something which means merriment to those around. What is to compare with the spirit of a young man who, caught in the act of smoking in a ward, cheerily remarked: "It's all right, Sister; I dropped my collar stud on the floor and I struck a match to try and find it." Or of a man without eyes and a smashed lower jaw bursting into laughter and telling his comrades he was going to be turned into a submarine after he had heard specialists in consultation say what plates, springs, screws and hinges they were going to get into his mouth to enable him to masticate his food!

Mr. Kessell might have returned to Fleet Street in 1920, for he says that a very tempting suggestion was then made to him, but he felt that there was still a tremendous call at St. Dunstan's, and he elected to remain and carry on what he considered more important and more humane work.

As time went on the work at St. Dunstan's naturally altered owing to trainees finishing their course of instruction and going out into the world again; and in 1917, 1918 and 1919,

departments for settling, after-care, supplies, visiting, etc., came into existence. In this way a good deal of the detail work was taken from his shoulders.

In 1921 came the tragic death of the founder of the wonderful work which was being done on behalf of the war-blinded men of the Imperial Forces—Sir Arthur Pearson. It was a great blow, but the organisation left behind was sufficient to cope with what looked like disaster. A new Council was formed and Captain Ian Fraser was elected Chairman.

By the death of Sir Arthur Pearson, Mr. Kessell lost a business associate of thirty-seven years. A short time before his death "C. A. P." wrote to him as follows:—

"A little line of grateful appreciation of the admirable work which you have done for St. Dunstan's. Nothing in this way could, I think, be more splendid than the manner in which St. Dunstan's spirit of unselfish helpfulness to the men who come here has been maintained. I know that all of them would like, if they could, to join me in this expression of gratitude to you."

Mr. Kessell now holds the important position of Treasurer and Appeals Organiser, and continues to put his shoulder to the wheel with undiminished ardour.

When Sir Arthur started his Fresh Air Fund, he asked him to act as its Honorary Secretary and Treasurer, a position which he still holds. For thirty-seven years, through the money collected under his able organisation, the children of our populous cities have been given either a day's outing or a fortnight's glorious holiday—landmarks which stand out for ever in their drab little lives. In the first year over twenty thousand children from the East End of London were given a day each in the country. In the following year the figure was doubled, and the scope of the Fund's activities began to extend throughout the British Isles. Of his work in touring the country, arranging committees, organising on a large scale—all this in addition to his other business duties—much could be written. Amidst all this hard work there were, of course, some amusing experiences. "In some of the big provincial towns," he tells us, "we were at first regarded almost with suspicion, for our suggestion that we had money we wanted other people to spend for us savoured very much of the modern confidence trick. I remember on one occasion we were most anxious to get together a committee in a certain big manufacturing

city. An alderman, whom we particularly wished to act as Chairman, positively refused to see us. In desperation we looked round for some means of gaining an audience. As luck would have it, the alderman was a big wholesale provision dealer, and it was the day set aside for commercial travellers to call on him with samples of their wares. With renewed hopes we took our places in the queue and eventually found ourselves in the presence of the great man," who—incidentally—undertook the work and carried it on for many years.

Some years ago a writer to the *Daily Telegraph* said: "Few have any idea of the system and organisation which, during recent years, have been directed towards affording these 'crowded hours of glorious life' to the widest possible number of children at the smallest cost per head. This development is due entirely to Arthur Pearson and his energetic coadjutor, Mr. Ernest Kessell."

To the children of our crowded slums he has helped to give health, providing them in early life with happy memories—to the men blinded in the war, who had to start life all over again, his cheery presence, no less than his untiring efforts, have been of incalculable value.

May he long continue his good works.
E. G.



SIGNOR ALFREDO NARDI, the blind violinist who had made himself known to thousands by playing for the sheer love of it in the streets of Kensington, died in London last month. Nardi, who was blinded in his youth through being struck by a stone, was a member of the Italian Royal Orchestra, and came to England in 1907. He gave recitals in the leading concert halls of London, Rome and other cities. The joy of music was so great to him that he often gave *al fresco* concerts in Kensington Gardens. Latterly he had been living in reduced circumstances.



ON April 5th Captain Sir Beachcroft Towse, V.C., K.C.V.O., formally opened Torr House, Hartley. This fine house, standing in extensive grounds on the Northern borders of Plymouth has been acquired by the Devonport and Western Counties Association for Promoting the General Welfare of the Blind, and will take the place of the establishment at Manor Lodge, Devonport. Seventy blind men and women will be accommodated at the Home.

PERSONALIA

MR. S. W. STARLING has been appointed General Superintendent and Secretary of the Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, in succession to the late Mr. R. G. Cowley.

WE learn that Mr. Ralph D. Smedley, M.A., M.D., has resigned the Honorary Secretaryship of the West Sussex Association for the Blind. His place is taken by Miss A. L. Grange, York Road Chambers, Bognor.

WE congratulate Mr. James Ferguson, B.A., M.B., D.P.H., Chief Assistant Medical Officer of Health for Lancashire, on his appointment as Medical Officer for Surrey. Dr. Ferguson is a member of the Executive Council of the National Institute for the Blind, representing the Northern Counties Association for the Blind.

WE learn that Mrs. Guy Campbell has been appointed Lady Principal of the Royal Normal College for the Blind, Upper Norwood. For many years Mrs. Campbell had ably assisted her husband and we are convinced that she will carry on his work with the same skill as did Mr. Campbell when, in his turn, he successfully followed the pioneer work of his father, Sir Francis Campbell.

WE learn that there are to be three blind candidates at the General Election. Mr. Fred Martin represented an Aberdeen constituency in the Parliament of 1922-23, but he was defeated at the Election in which Captain Ian Fraser gained his seat in North St. Pancras. Both of them are standing for election in May. In addition, Mr. T. Aphrys, who lost his sight during the War, is standing as a Labour candidate against Mr. Lloyd George in Carmarthen Boroughs.

THE romance of a blind girl musician lies behind a song, which is shortly to be published, dedicated to Miss Betty Balfour, the film "star." Miss Katherine Reeves, who is twenty-two years of age, is an accomplished musician, and is organist of Holy Trinity Church, Southall. Her composition will probably be the theme song in Miss Balfour's next picture,

THE BLIND CHIEF OF MEXICO

(An historical sketch)

SUPPOSE many readers of THE BEACON have read something of Prescott, the great blind historian. But few perhaps remember that strange and fateful figure, who appears for a moment or so in "The Conquest of Mexico,"—the blind chieftain of Tlascala.

The story is worth recalling, because here is one of those many cases where a blind man had profound influence upon the tides of history. It is a tragic tale; and one day some writer may turn it into a moving drama.

When Cortes landed in Mexico with his little band of adventurers, he found that he had an Empire to conquer. The domination of the Aztecs had spread right to the Atlantic sea-board, as well as far to the South, North and West. They had of course no fire-arms, no horses, and very scanty defensive armour. Cortes' men had all these. But fire-arms and horses would not have proved adequate against a whole Empire of the courageous and highly organised Mexicans. Cortes would have failed in his desperate enterprise, if he had not gained allies.

The problem of finding allies was not so difficult as it might seem. The Empire of the Aztecs was controlled by military force and by that alone. The Imperial power sat at the centre in Mexico City, levying tribute from all the outlying districts. On the basis of this tribute the Aztecs built up their elaborate, strange and rather terrifying civilisation. But they paid the price for their tyranny in the secret disloyalty and smouldering revolt of all the peoples they had conquered in their great military expeditions. Once these subject peoples found a leadership, they were encouraged to rebel against their overlord, the Aztec Emperor; and Cortes was ingenious enough to provide them with such a leadership.

Moreover—and this was of even greater importance—there were still a few small nationalities in Mexico who had never been subdued by the Aztecs. Chief among these was the little republic of Tlascala, which lay in a very favourable position for defence against an invader. Its people was of the same stock as the Aztecs, and their culture and religion were of much the same quality. They

were warlike and vigorous; and they were governed by a kind of feudal aristocracy, bound together by a code very similar to the laws of mediæval chivalry.

On his daring march inland Cortes came across the Tlascalan territory; and at once its rulers were faced with the problem as to what they should do. Reports of the Spanish prowess had of course reached them. They met in council.

Now one of the most important 'magistrates' of the country at that moment was an aged chieftain, who had grown almost blind. His son, a fiery young warrior, was commander of the army. The old man advised peace or, at any rate, diplomacy. The son was in favour of strong resistance. It would have been possible then—and indeed later on—to have entered into an alliance with the Aztecs, their ancient enemies, and to have agreed to join against the invading white men. Whether or no this scheme crossed the mind of the blind chieftain, he did not put it into practice. Instead, the council yielded to the son's fierce oratory and the army was prepared for war.

A series of bloody battles took place. The Tlascalan warriors flung themselves with amazing courage against the fire-arms and cavalry of the Spaniards; and at times the result seemed doubtful. But Cortes pressed on; and at last the native resistance gave way. The blind councillor gained once more the ear of the Tlascalan nobles and a truce was asked for and obtained.

When Cortes entered the City of Tlascala, it was the same elder who gave him hospitality and who arranged the alliance between the two forces. Tlascalan troops were to march with the Spaniards to overthrow the Emperor Montezuma and to share the victory.

In this way the strength of Mexico was divided against itself. And, as it happened, the help of the Tlascalans was invaluable to Cortes. After being received into the Aztec Capital and establishing his position there, he was forced later to retreat with heavy losses. Indeed, there is little question that his weak and dispirited band might have been overwhelmed or destroyed by exposure and want, if he had not had the Tlascalan territory as a refuge. He could withdraw here behind the

Tlascalan defences and re-equip himself for a new advance.

It appears that the Aztecs were willing at this juncture to make peace with the Tlascalans and with their assistance to destroy Cortes once and for all. Again the blind old chief prevailed. The Spaniards were their allies and the oath of friendship could not be broken. The Spaniards were given food and shelter; and when they marched out, again the Tlascalan forces went with them under the old man's son.

One need not here describe the siege and fall of the City of Mexico, the long agony, the desperate resistance, the human sacrifices and the final catastrophe. Once the might of the Aztecs had crumbled up, the whole country lay under the heel of Cortes. There was no further resistance possible. And almost immediately it became only too plain to the unhappy natives what they had to expect.

The greed of the Spaniards was aroused; here were huge and wealthy territories for the asking—and natives by the hundred thousand to toil in plantation and mine. 'The richest spoils of Mexico' were to pass overseas and adorn the Court of Spain, equip her armies and fleet and make her the greatest power in Europe.

The Tlascalans realized their mistake. They were perhaps to be given a slightly more favoured position than the Aztecs and the other conquered peoples; but they felt that their civilisation was doomed and that even the favours they had would soon be filched from them.

Suddenly the blow fell. The Spaniards accused the son of the old Chief, the Commander of the Tlascalan armies, of plotting against them. Perhaps the story was true, but it is hard to say. The young warrior no doubt saw that his country was in danger and may have planned a last desperate effort to rouse the natives to revolt. He was tried, condemned and executed.

That is the tale of the blind Elder of Tlascala, whose counsel so greatly influenced the course of events in the first Conquest of Mexico. Needless to say, he was little more than a tool in the hand of history. Even if Cortes himself had failed, other Spaniards would have followed him; and there is no doubt that the civilisation of Mexico was doomed to destruction beneath the advancing Europeans. Yet the narrative is a dramatic one—part of one of the most dramatic chapters of all history; and readers may incline to find a stern moral in it.

F. C.

OBITUARY

Mr. JOHN MULHALL, B.L., J.P.

A GAIN the blind world has sustained a heavy loss in the death of one who gave his steadfast help to those sharing his handicap.

Mr. John Mulhall, of the Hill House, Caversham, Reading, has gone to his rest after a very severe illness, and our deep sympathy goes out to his wife in her great loss.

Mr. Mulhall's brilliant career was outlined in the BEACON three years ago. He was Private Secretary to the Marquis of Waterford and to two Lord-Lieutenants of Ireland, and throughout his tenure of office came into touch with the leading figures of Irish political life. He was Honorary Secretary to the Irish Distress Fund, Vice-Chairman of the Irish Prisons Board, and a member of the Irish Textile Exhibition Committee in 1897, and of the Vice-Regal Commission on Children's Street Trading in 1902. He was a member of two Hospital Boards, the Meath Hospital and County Dublin Infirmary and the National Hospital for Consumption.

In 1908 his eyesight became impaired and he completely lost the sight of one eye. The other eye became affected, and a few years later he was obliged to retire from public service. On the advice of Sir Arthur Pearson he attended a course of study at the Royal Normal College for the Blind, and soon became a proficient typist and Braillist. On returning to Ireland in 1916, he resumed work in connection with various hospitals and other charitable institutions, and was nominated Deputy-Chairman of the newly-formed Irish Advisory Committee for the Blind.

He was an Honorary Member of the Executive Committee of the Shropshire Association for the Blind, a member of the Executive Committee of the Reading Association, and in 1924 joined the Council of the National Institute for the Blind, being a member of various committees and taking the greatest practical interest in the activities of the Institute.

His was a deeply religious nature. He brought to all his undertakings a knowledge born of patient and thorough research, and he will be greatly missed in the blind world.



The new Workshops for the Blind of Kent in Eastney Street, Greenwich, premises which were formerly the Roan School for Boys, were formally opened on April 11.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF INDUSTRIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Abridged Report on the Possibilities of Employment Insurance in England.



REPORT of the American Foundation for the Blind on Insurance Underwriting has been carefully studied and a summary forwarded to, and interviews obtained with the following experts in Insurance work, with a view to discovering whether the conditions governing Insurance in America were similar to those in this country:—

Mr. Sherriff, Provident Mutual Life Assurance Co., Ltd.

Dr. May, Prudential Assurance Co., Ltd.

Mr. Tallack, Commercial Union Assurance Co., Ltd.

In addition to the above enquiries, a questionnaire accompanied by a letter giving the principal results of the American report and setting out the objects of our research, was circulated to every Insurance Company. Some of the facts which are fairly widely agreed upon are mentioned below.

1. *Differences between English and American Insurance.*

Practically all the American Companies employ large numbers of whole-time agents who are in effect salesmen and who are paid either a salary, or commission, or both. In this country, however, it is the general practice (especially of Life Offices) to obtain the bulk of their business from representatives who follow other occupations—such as Solicitors, Bank Managers, Accountants, Estate Agents, etc.

Some of the large Industrial Offices employ a large staff of collectors who obtain the instalments due from policy holders by calling from "door to door"; a number of superintendents are also appointed to supervise this work.

The usual Life Offices employ a few salaried Agency Inspectors who interview the agents from time to time. Their qualifications include a thorough training in the inside organisation of a Life Office and technical knowledge acquired in many cases from the courses of the Insurance Institutes; the work of these officials is both strenuous and difficult.

The handicap of a blind person would secure them, to some extent, the sympathy of their prospective clients, and they could probably count on being given a fair hearing; but the Insurance experts were of opinion that this success might ultimately be very slight.

2. *Some specific problems which would probably be encountered by the blind in Insurance.*

(a) There would be considerable difficulties confronting a blind man who attempted the whole work in connection with a composite office; probably specialisation in the departments of Life or Comprehensive Household Insurance would be advantageous in the initial stages.

(b) Besides the translation of ordinary rates into Braille, which in itself would be no small task, some method of quoting the innumerable tables of surrender values, bonus figures, and pages of estimates would have to be found. The correspondence over these points might also be fairly large. The various methods used in America for overcoming these difficulties might be utilised or adapted, especially if a competent secretary were employed.

(c) The system of Records for English Insurance would be of a far more individual and intricate nature than those necessary in the American Insurance.

(d) The agent has to satisfy the company that the person is a suitable client. This would be difficult for a blind person especially when dealing with unscrupulous persons.

(e) The expense of personal assistance for the blind agent would be considerable, and the results obtained, at least for some long time, would not cover this outlay.

(f) The blind agent who commenced Insurance selling among his own friends and Blind Institutions would have to exercise great care in ensuring that his

business was progressively developed and that too much reliance was not placed on the early results achieved. It was also thought by responsible persons in Insurance work that in the case of sighted people, the most satisfactory type of business is obtained by opening up new ground rather than by beginning with friends.

A considerable difference was found between the results obtained by the questionnaire method and the views of experts interviewed, who, taking a personal interest in the problem, were after careful consideration able to make the following suggestions which, on the whole, are sufficiently encouraging to justify further examination.

The replies from the questionnaire may be summarised as follows :—

Number of Companies written to	...	89
Total number of replies received	...	25
Nature of replies :		
Impossible for the Blind	...	7
No Suggestions or Openings	...	11
Possibilities but great difficulties	...	6
Matter under consideration	...	1

During personal interviews it was suggested that there were possibilities for blind persons (more especially the partially blind) in English Insurance as independent agents on a commission basis. The difficulties in this kind of work were however stressed, but it was not considered impossible for a highly educated and adaptable blind man.

It was suggested that the blind person should first make himself familiar with Insurance work by

- (a) Reading the literature on the subject.
- (b) Working for some time along with a sighted person in the office to obtain an idea of outside canvassing.
- (c) Taking an approved course in the subject.
- (d) The careful study of the most suitable departments of Insurance business (probably Life and Comprehensive Household Insurance).
- (e) The study of the methods of rate quoting and record keeping, etc., and the preparation of Braille or other note-books suitable to the individual himself.
- (f) The development of the ability to make social contacts and of successfully presenting his arguments.

The blind agent would then be in a position to commence with the circle of his acquaintances and gradually extend his clientèle and build up a satisfactory business.

In view of the general attitude, however, the difficulties in such an undertaking are not to be minimised. But although the conditions in English Insurance are very different from those in America, it would seem quite possible for an intelligent and keen blind man of suitable personality to obtain an economic position which would both satisfy his desire for independence and give scope for the expression of his abilities in congenial ways.



BOOK REVIEW

A PLACE AMONG MEN

By CAPTAIN GERALD LOWRY.
(Mondiale, 2s.)

CAPTAIN GERALD LOWRY is known to us as the first soldier blinded in the Great War. His book is an interesting account of how a forceful personality fought against circumstances and became of real help to his fellow-men.

After becoming blind, Captain Lowry set to work to develop his other senses to their fullest extent, in particular going in for all kinds of open-air exercise, winning swimming handicaps against sighted competitors, and giving sparring exhibitions in aid of various charitable causes. He also took up running with the Worcester Park Beagles, and gives a delightful and humorous account of his experiences with them.

On the advice of Sir Arthur Pearson he qualified in massage, Swedish gymnastics and electricity, being appointed to the staff of the Middlesex Hospital. Having learnt that a College of Osteopathy had been recently opened in London, he applied and was accepted there as a student, and was the first male graduate to take his diploma in that subject. He then set out to visit the colleges of osteopathy in the United States, where the science has spread rapidly of late years. Since his return to England he has greatly advanced in his profession, and his book setting forth his exposition of osteopathy is full of useful hints to those who are seeking health. People who are interested in this new science will find the volume of great use, and to all thinking persons who admire success under difficulties it will make a very strong appeal.

LOUIS BRAILLE
LUX IN TENEBRIS

BY W. J. DOWDING.

*Thick darkness brooded o'er our cheerless land,
And wistfully we waited through the night,
Until your voice was heard "Let there be light,"
And lo! the day shone forth at your command.*

*"Let there be light," and light indeed appeared,
Flooding the mind with poet's rapturous song,
With scenes of colour, form and vistas long,
With words that strengthened and with thoughts
that cheered.*

*Imagination paints each scene described,
And memory is helped to guard her store,
While music's fleeting fancies are transcribed,
And wander fugitive or lost no more.*

*These are thy triumphs, noble heart! we raise
A grateful monument,—our heartfelt praise.*

THE BARCLAY WORKSHOPS

LADIES will find much to interest them in the latest price list issued by the Barclay Workshops. Frocks of all descriptions, woven and knitted, at prices which run from two-and-a-half to five-and-a-half guineas will attract holiday-makers, for they are suitable for all the vagaries of our capricious climate. There is a variety of jumpers, cardigans, house coats and scarves, all at reasonable prices, and socks and stockings suitable for the golf course, the office or the ball-room are on sale. Attractive children's garments are listed, and articles for the household include cushion-covers, bed-spreads, towels and kitchen-cloths woven in artistic colourings.

A visit to these Workshops is invited, and the Superintendent will be pleased to send copies of the price list, post free, on application to 21, Crawford Street, London, W.1 (Telephone, Welbeck 1921).



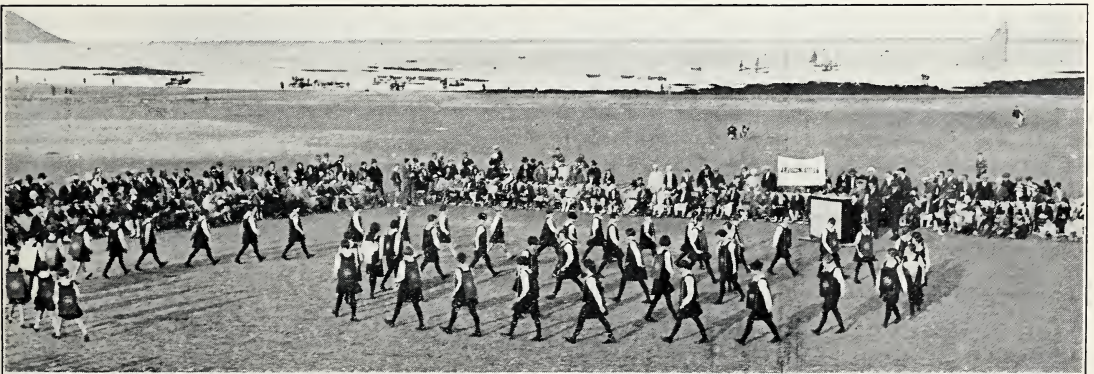
LIVING WHIST AT DOUGLAS, ISLE OF MAN

MONA'S ISLE, that quaint and beautiful little dependency of our Empire, rising like a verdure-clad Atlantis from the midst of our Irish Sea, does not, as a self-governing state, come within the operations of the Blind Persons' Act, 1920, but, nevertheless, its inhabitants, and the thousands who yearly flock to its shores, pull their full weight in support of all work that is undertaken for the betterment of the conditions of the blind.

One of the most interesting events of the Douglas summer season is the annual display of Living Whist given by the pupils of the Douglas High School for Girls, in aid of

the Sunshine Homes for Blind Babies, and the popularity of the event can be measured by the fact that the collections amongst the spectators during the performances of the past seven years have amounted to £523 8s. od., a figure of which, not only the schoolgirls themselves, but the whole of our little sister nation can be justly proud.

The performances are given at low tide on the foreshore opposite the Villa Marina, and in the accompanying photograph the girls can be seen shuffling the cards between two of the games.



LIVING WHIST FOR THE BLIND.

OLDHAM BLIND WOMEN'S INDUSTRIES

TWENTY-FIVE years ago, "the Blind Women's Industries" was founded by Miss Marjory Lees of Oldham to provide training and employment for the blind women of the town.

A visit to the large Institutions at Bradford and Manchester had shown her what blind folks could do. In Oldham, although there was a Workshop for the Men, a Home-Teaching Society, and, under the Local Education Committee, a Special Class for the Teaching of Blind Children, nothing was done to find the women employment; and the need was evident.

The existing societies supplied a list of suitable women, and they were asked if they would care to have a workroom. Premises, materials and a teacher would be provided, orders for chair-caning and knitting would be taken, and the workers would be paid the amount charged to customers less the cost of the materials used.

Suitable accommodation was found in an old building known as Werneth Hall, and Miss Millicent Field, who had had experience of work amongst the blind in London and Bradford, was engaged as superintendent. The venture opened on April 25th, 1904, with six workers, two of whom had received some previous teaching, and four who had had no training but came resolved to learn. One of these, a girl who was remarkable for her regular attendance, said that before the workroom opened she often spent the greater part of the day in bed because she had nothing to do! The workroom brought to her and others a new outlook and energy.

The work undertaken in those early days comprised rug-making, besides knitting and chair-caning, and was all done by hand. In the first three months nearly one hundred chairs were re-seated, some being done for a furnishing firm whose manager expressed complete satisfaction with the quality of the work. As time went on, the number of workers gradually increased, as girls were able to enter when they left school at the age of sixteen. Besides these, others came who had had no previous training; and there is no doubt that they have all found the benefit, not only of being wage-earners, but also of having regular occupation and

opportunities for social intercourse with one another.

It has always been Miss Field's aim to keep abreast with the times, to adopt new ideas, and to aim at turning out only the best work. A circular knitting machine was soon installed for making stockings and socks; and, once this was mastered, its time-saving advantages were so obvious that machines of various types gradually superseded hand knitting; and now artistic woollen sports coats and jumpers and children's garments are produced which will compare favourably with those on sale in good shops. It is a pity that no record was kept of the number of socks knitted during the war; it would have reached some thousands of pairs!

For seventeen years the Industries were privately financed, but after the coming into operation of the Blind Persons Act of 1920, and on the advice of H.M. Inspector, arrangements were made by which it was taken over by a local Committee, the premises being lent, and subsequently enlarged, by the foundress. This enabled the Workroom to receive grants from the Ministry of Health and from the Town and County Councils. The number of workers continues to increase, and a second enlargement is now contemplated; so that a larger sphere of usefulness still lies ahead.

The years have brought many changes, and we miss some familiar faces whom Death has called away; others have gone forward to take up responsible posts, such as home teachers, masseuses, etc. Sighted girls who came originally to the workroom to sew up and finish the work turned out by the machines have become forewomen or gone as managers to other similar Industries: and the consciousness that it has brought so much into the lives of the workers has been the reward of those who laid its foundation.

MABLE M. SHARPLES.



A SUPPLEMENTARY catalogue containing additions to the National Library for the Blind since 1927 is now ready, and can be obtained from the Library price 4d., post free.



A Box at the Albert Hall has been left to the National Institute for the Blind for the use of blind persons, especially those who are musicians.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE following interesting letters give some readers' opinion on the wireless programmes, in particular, the "Talks." One of the correspondents gives us a very good insight into what wireless really means to blind listeners.

Sir,—I have just read with much interest the supplement on wireless talks. I am a keen listener, and, having a loud speaker in the house, we quite frequently have an informal group. I find, however, that the lack of text-books in Braille is a very great drawback, the twenty-minute talks serving merely to whet one's appetite. It seems to me that twenty minutes is a very short period for an interesting talk, I, for my part, would welcome half an hour at least.

Being far from a B.B.C. station, I find that quite often the reception is completely spoiled by the jamming of other stations and what are known as atmospherics. Can anything yet be done to prevent such interference? I have recently been advised to buy a portable set, but before doing so, I should be glad to learn from those who really know, if such a set may be depended upon to bring as good results as a set having an aerial.

Of late I have not noticed your publishing the syllabus of B.B.C. talks in Braille. If you have embossed the new series I should be glad to have a copy:

Yours, etc.

(Miss) M. G.

* * *

Dear Sir,—I have read with much interest the article by Mr. Rendall on group listening, and since you have so kindly taken the trouble to co-operate with the B.B.C. on our behalf, will you bear with me for a while, as I want to touch on a subject very near my heart, namely, the wireless talks. I trust that you will see your way to help me, or I should rather say, *us*, as I have the opinion of at least a dozen people, both blind and sighted, to back me—in fact I have been asked by several friends to write this letter.

To us blind people, the wireless is not an amusement to turn to when there is nothing better to do or when it is raining; on the contrary it is a vital and essential item of our

daily lives for the sake of which many a smaller pleasure is often sacrificed. Or take the case of some of us who don't stand a chance of getting out in the fresh air in the week-ends, and have to stay at home, while the sighted world, rich and poor, is enjoying sunshine and exercise—to such of us the wireless is not only company and consolation, but makes us realise the fact that we are not alone; that there are thousands and thousands of other people compelled to stay indoors, some of them perhaps in pain, and that there is the studio to cheer us all.

I have tried to prove to you how much the wireless means to us, and because of this very fact we are at times too critical and too disappointed when the programmes do not come up to our expectation. May we not be allowed to grumble a little? And that brings me to my chief grievance. Please believe me that I am not alone in what I think, as I have already said. To put the matter into a nutshell, there is too much music and too little talk; what's more, and this is the gist of my letter, the talks are much too short. Can any man be expected to give full justice to his subject, invariably a scientific one, in 15 minutes? The talks are compressed to a *précis*, a bare summary—and are always concluded by the same words "the limit of time does not permit me, etc." Even Sir Walford Davies, the great teacher and great artist, is only allotted 20 minutes, illustrations and all. Yet I have met several people, and heard of more, who, though not musical themselves, always listen to him, fascinated and held in a spell not only by the pictures he paints or the lesson he teaches, but by the personality of the man himself and his wonderful eloquence. Take another example: Commander Stephen King Hall. Can most people, even apart from the blind, have the opportunity of listening to any description of travel so beautiful, so interesting and instructive as he gives? We were just approaching Malta, visible in the blue distance; we were flying. The picture was glorious—blue skies, blue seas; the Pyrenees rising on the north; their peaks snow-bound, while orange orchards spread at their base. The blow fell before I was ready for it; "the limit of time does not permit me"

Yet another example: Like so many of us, I never hear the newspapers. Mr. Vernon Bartlett is my only informant of the outside world. Once a week, one quarter of an hour

—is there time for anything but just to mention the names of the various countries? No sooner has he described one or two points when there is a silence. Then the usual singing or music—as though to apologise to the public for inflicting on it something so very dull! Why should music have preference? Why are there so few plays? The human voice is so friendly, so restful, and to listen to a talk there is not such a demand on concentration as is in the case of music, whereas the life of blind people is concentration all through. Do not take the view that I am no lover of music—I am a musician myself, but the handling of a beautiful art must be discreet, for fear the art itself may become cheap. One hears so often the argument that the B.B.C. have to cater for a vast audience. Yet I venture to think that the really appreciative and grateful audience is not so divided in its tastes as it might seem.

Quite recently we have been listening to political talks, and in this case the speakers were allowed half an hour. It was a relief to feel that the man had a chance, so to say, to get it off his chest—which only goes to prove my statement.

If you can see your way to help us—your opinion will carry weight with the B.B.C.—and the talks could be lengthened, there is nothing we would appreciate more than to arrange a group to listen and discuss the subjects which we so much enjoy.

Yours truly,

(Miss) H. W.

* * *

Handwriting For the Blind

In the following letter Mr. Walter H. Dixon replies to the paragraph in last month's BEACON entitled "Hand-Writing for the Blind."

Sir,—The question has been raised in your columns as to whether blind persons should learn to write in the normal way. As the majority of the blind become so in later life, this question hardly arises in their case. As to those who become blind at an earlier period, the matter seems to present great difficulty, so great, indeed, as to preclude the probability of writing on a large scale. More can be said, however, as to a young person who is blind, setting down his signature. . . . Why should not some Public Body offer a prize, as an experiment, for the

best handwriting of a blind person who has either never seen, or who has learnt to write after having become blind?

WALTER H. DIXON.



THE BLIND OF BULGARIA

THE following is an extract from an interesting report submitted in Esperanto by the Director of the King Alexander Institution for the Blind in Zemun, Jugoslavia.

According to Government statistics, the blind population in Bulgaria for the year 1926 consisted of 3,820 persons. The only Institution for the Blind in this country, which is at Sofia, and is entirely supported by the State, was founded in 1905 by Professor Pasev, the author of a treatise on "The Hygiene of the Eyes." Dr. Pasev was the first Principal of the School, and strongly urged the necessity for establishing more educational centres for the blind. The present Director is Mr. Stefanov, who was for many years a teacher of the deaf-and-dumb.

Children are admitted into the School from seven to fourteen years of age, the fees varying in amount according to the circumstances of the parents. Children of poor parents are accepted free of charge and maintained by the State, and the money derived from paying pupils is used to augment a fund instituted with a view to purchasing a house for residential purposes. As far as is practicable the curriculum follows that in use in the ordinary schools, but the Institution is handicapped by lack of apparatus. Braille is the only embossed system used, and German and Esperanto are also taught.

The teachers employed in this Institution must hold a specified diploma, and are required to spend two years of study in the School before they are finally examined and entrusted with the instruction of the pupils. Under a law passed in 1924, teachers of the blind are paid on a somewhat higher scale than that which operates in the ordinary schools.

In the year 1928-29 there were seventy-seven pupils at this Institution. The pupils' education covers a period of nine years, six being devoted to ordinary educational subjects and three to musical or industrial training. The chief branches of industry are brush and

basket-making, netting and the manufacture of padded shoes and slippers. On leaving school each pupil is given a State grant with which to start a career, and no scholars are retained unless required as helpers.

The life of the blind worker in Bulgaria cannot be said to be a happy one, as he cannot by his own efforts earn sufficient for his maintenance. The various centres of industry decline to accept him, and there are no workshops or homes for the blind in the country. He is therefore dependent on his relations or on the community, as the State gives no further assistance apart from education.

There are three welfare societies the for blind in Bulgaria, viz.:

1. The Blind Esperantist Society, known as the "Balkan Star," which is privately supported. It was established in 1921, and has for its object the founding of workrooms for the adult blind. Classes for Braille instruction are conducted, and a small library has been established.

2. The "Protection" Association for the Blind, the aim of which is to found a large institution for adults and to open up facilities for the sale of their work. In conjunction with the "Balkan Star," this Association is also responsible for the establishment of a reading-room in the City Library where current periodicals are read aloud by sighted readers.

3. A Society known as "Darkness," which is concerned with the general welfare of the war-blinded, over one hundred and fifty in number. These men are taught various trades, but are solely dependent on a small pension which, unfortunately, is inadequate for their subsistence.



THE MESSAGE LIBRARY

WE wish once more to remind our readers of the special Message Library for blind students which is of such great use to them in preparing for the various examinations in connection with this and kindred subjects. Mr. P. Jenner Verrall, F.R.C.S., recently contributed an article to the *Medical World* on the special features of this Branch of the Institute's work. He told the story of the foundation of the Library by the National Institute for the Blind, of how it was made a Branch of the Message Department, and how Dr. Lloyd

Johnstone, one of the first massage students, became the librarian, a post which he held until his death in 1924. One of his most important services to the Message Library, when it was started, was the condensing, editing and transcribing into Braille of Gray's "Anatomy," Hoblyn's "Dictionary of Medical Terms," an advanced Physiology and other standard works, in which work he had the valuable assistance of Mrs. Chaplin Hall, Secretary of the Message Department and School, and Organising Secretary of the Association of Certificated Blind Masseurs. Mr. Jenner Verrall himself now advises on the selection of recently published books and articles for transcription into Braille. He gives the students a series of lectures on modern orthopædics once a year, and meets them in the School from time to time during the remainder of the year for revision.

"I found," he said, "that Dr. Johnstone's work had been done so well that the Library represented a very good selection of such medical works as were really required by masseurs. Since then I have watched the journals for useful, concise articles on suitable subjects, and have had these added to the Library with the permission of the authors, a permission which has always been generously given. In addition it has been necessary to bring up to date by partial re-transcription of new editions, such works as "Aids to Surgery," etc. Commenting on the problems of expense which the selection of lengthy works entails, especially in the case of diagrams, he says: "One has to try and skim the cream. Additions are slow but continuous, as one concentrates on the provision of information on such new subjects as artificial sunlight, etc., which have been previously unrepresented."

Students are allowed to have volumes sent out to them free of charge, the cost of postage one way being defrayed by the National Institute for the Blind. In addition every qualified masseur is furnished with a personal copy of certain essential works such as "Aids to Medicine," etc., numbering thirty-five volumes. At the moment the Library contains 679 volumes, *i.e.*, 462 large volumes representing all or a selected part of 179 works, and 217 pocket edition volumes representing 147 works.

There are at the moment some 200 blind masseurs and masseuses in active practice in all parts of the country and overseas,

GREATER LONDON FUND FOR THE BLIND

FEBRUARY and March have been months of many engagements, mainly in pursuit of the elusive "Geranium Day" seller. Probably the only audiences who escaped this appeal were the Brethren of ten Masonic Lodges addressed by Mr. Preece, and the church congregations, although several Brotherhoods in different parts of London were exhorted by both Mr. Preece and Mr. Williams to give loyal support to the Sisterhoods.

The Blind Concert Party played their part in emphasising the appeal, visits having been paid to Sanderstead, Bexley, Leytonstone, Wembley, Tooting, Blackheath, Yiewsley, Eastcote, Acton Baptist Church, Clapton, Ponders End, Acton Wesley Guild, Grays and Crofton Park. They assisted also at the fine concert arranged by Mrs. Ta'Bois at Woodford, Carshalton and Ealing, and by singing at numerous other gatherings.

The concert in Carshalton was again very kindly arranged by Mrs. Lister Guest, who had secured the services of the Haydn Wood Trio, the Soprano (Miss Emily Gardner) being her pupil. Other pupils likewise gave their professional services, and there was an excellent financial result. Mr. R. J. Meller, M.P., and the Chairman of the Council spoke; Mrs. Meller was also present.

At Ealing the concert was arranged by that old friend of the Fund, Miss Nellie Norway, and was under the patronage of Sir Herbert Neild, K.C., M.P., who left the House to give a warm recommendation to the work which the Greater London Fund is doing. Miss Norway had gathered round her a number of her professional brothers and sisters, and the great hall was crowded to overflowing. His Worship the Mayor, who supported Sir Herbert, referred to this fact as almost unprecedented, and testified to the pride of the Borough in possessing so clever an artiste as Miss Nellie Norway.

Even the dancers were told the date of "Geranium Day": both at the Lamson Paragon Sports Association Dance and Whist Drive, and at Tottenham's Seventh Annual Dance for this Fund. At the latter Lt.-Col. H. Solomon, O.B.E., M.P., expressed the hope that those who were enjoying themselves would come forward as flag sellers. Mr. Martin and the Committee had worked hard, and the event was as successful as usual. No doubt, Mrs. Hardie also roped in her friends

for her own depot at her private dance for the Fund during the first week in March.

Lambeth Circle elected its new Secretary, who as a first and pleasant duty supported the very successful Whist Drive organised by Mrs. McRae.

On March 7, Captain Sir Beachcroft Towse, V.C., K.C.V.O., C.B.E., received the "Geranium Day" workers and "Helpers of the Blind" at the New Burlington Galleries. There was a delightful musical programme, provided by Miss Emily Gardner, Mr. Edward Fifer, Miss Nellie Norway, Miss Mollie Seymour and Mr. David Buchan; also dancing and cards. At the Park Lane Hotel, Sir Beachcroft also kindly received West End depot holders, when Miss Gladys Henman, Mr. George Webber and Miss Gwendolyn Teagle entertained the guests with songs and violin solos.

The result of "Geranium Day" is not yet known, but will probably be given in the news next month.



MASSAGE SUCCESSES

WE are pleased to report two more successes in the massage world, this time of two South Africans. Mr. Ronald Brookes and Mr. Gerald Schermbrucker have successfully qualified at the recent examinations in massage, medical gymnastics and medical electricity. These two masseurs proved themselves to be students of marked ability during their training at the National Institute for the Blind School of Massage, and we offer them our best wishes for prosperous careers. They return to Stellenbosch and Johannesburg respectively, where they will take up their new work.



BRAILLE MUSIC MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY

PIANO.

<i>Composer.</i>	<i>Title.</i>	<i>Vols.</i>
Bach.	First English Suite in A	1
	Second English Suite in A minor	2
Dale, B. J.	Prunella	3
Franck, Cesar.	Prelude, Choral and Fugue in B minor	4
Grieg.	Concerto in A minor	5
Grieg.	Concerto in A minor, Orchestral arrangement	6
Macdowell.	Sonata No. 1, "Tragica"	7
	Sonata No. 2, "Eroica"	8
Mendelssohn.	Presto Agitato (No. 2 of "Two Musical Sketches")	9

THEORY.

Flight, A. T.	Dictionary of Technical Terms used in the Pianoforte Trade	10
Macpherson, Stewart.	Melody and Harmony	11-18

The BEACON

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INTERESTS OF THE BLIND

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BLIND MUSICIANS: A GREAT FORWARD MOVEMENT



AN important international Congress of Braille musical experts, representing some 14 nationalities, was held in Paris during the last week of April, as a result of which an enormous advance has been made possible in regard to the musical culture of the blind of every country.

Hitherto the Braille Music-notation used by the blind (the equivalent of the Staff-notation used by the seeing) has been so widely divergent in various countries that it has often been difficult, if not impossible, for the blind of one nationality to understand many of the music-symbols used by those of other lands. To secure uniformity of use was the object of the Congress and, happily, success crowned their efforts. Consequently the Braille music-notation symbols of the future will be in accordance with one definite and universally accepted style, one which English people will be glad to learn corresponds with that adopted since the year 1922 in this country, the year in which the National Institute for the Blind published its Text-book or "Key" on the subject. This manual represented the result of many years of enquiry into the practice of Braillists of this and other countries, and the ultimate adoption of the most approved principles. The Institute's "Key" having since been studied by the experts of other nationalities,

the way was gradually prepared for such a Congress as that which has just been held. It was necessary, however, for the success of any international Congress of this kind that it should be called together and presided over by neutrals. This was happily arranged under the auspices of the American Braille Press, Paris, and the Presidency of M. George L. Raverat, its Secretary-General.

As a result of the decisions of this Congress, the blind are now enabled to look forward to an acquaintance with, and study of, not only the Braille music published in their own land, but of all lands. Thus the range of choice in the future will be tremendously enlarged, access having been made possible to the published works of every Braille printing house throughout the world, instead of only those published in the style peculiar to the country in which the blind happened to reside.

Homage to Louis Braille.

Arising out of the Congress an interesting event took place on April 29th, when all the delegates journeyed to the village of Coupvray, some 25 miles from Paris, to present to the Mayor a bronze palm, suitably inscribed, to be affixed to the Statue of Louis Braille in the public square of the village. This was intended as an act of international homage to the memory of the inventor of the Braille script, who was born in Coupvray in the year 1809, and in commemoration of the Centenary year of the invention itself.

The Mayor, Mons. Bouffault, greeted the deputation cordially and read an address of welcome, in which he spoke of the appreciation felt by the inhabitants of the village of the honour done to the memory of their fellow-townsmen, and of the pride they felt in knowing that so great a benefactor of humanity had been born at that place.

Mons. E. Grosjean-Maupin (Director, l'Institution des Jeunes Aveugles, Paris) then followed with an address to the Mayor, in which he voiced the sentiments which actuated the Congress in asking the inhabitants of Coupvray to allow them to affix to the memorial a tribute, in French, which represented the feelings of every nation, and one which would serve to testify for all time to the fact that the blind were for ever indebted for incalculable benefits to the genius of Louis Braille. The foreign delegates were then invited to speak. Mr. Rodenberg spoke for the American Foundation for the Blind; Herr Reuss for the German Institutions, and Mr. Watson for the National Institute for the Blind, England. Mr. Watson's remarks were as follows:—

Mr. Mayor,

I welcome the privilege, as one of the British delegates to the Braille Congress of Paris, to offer a tribute, as from my own country, to the genius of that great benefactor of the blind of every land, whose memory we seek to honour by our visit to-day to this place of his birth.

Nowhere throughout the world is the name of Louis Braille held in higher esteem than in Great Britain and the British Empire. Indeed, in this the Centenary Year of the invention of the Braille script, a special effort is being made, under the auspices of the English National Institute for the Blind, to commemorate that historic event which may be said to have secured the intellectual emancipation of the blind, viz:—the introduction of a universally adopted method of inter-communication by writing and printing in embossed characters.

I am all the more proud, Mr. Mayor, of the honour of being permitted thus to address you when I reflect that it was my privilege for some years to be the Musical Director of the School for the Blind in Liverpool, England, which was founded two years after the inauguration of the famous Institution des Jeunes Aveugles in Paris.

We rejoice, Sir, in being able to bear our united testimony to the incalculable benefits which, in the mercy of God, have been bes-

towed upon the blind of every country, through the genius of your noble and illustrious townsman—Louis Braille.

* * *

At the close of the ceremony the Mayor introduced to the party a member of the Braille family, who, together with the rest of the assembled villagers, was deeply touched at the honour extended to his great ancestor.

The party was then conducted to the tiny cottage in which Louis Braille was born, and M. Raverat, Secretary-General of the American Braille Press, Paris, asked the Mayor if he would, at a later date, accept a tablet—suitably inscribed—from the delegates of the countries represented at the Congress, to be affixed to the house, indicating that the inventor of the universally adopted script for the blind was born there on the 4th of January, 1809. In the name of the village, this offer was gratefully accepted by the Mayor, and the party returned to Paris. The ceremony throughout was simple and deeply touching, many of the villagers making no attempt to hide their emotions.



BRAILLE CENTENARY APPEAL

THE "School Music Review" recently devoted a long leading article to the Braille Centenary Appeal of the National Institute for the Blind. After directing readers to an "account of the romance of bringing light to the blind," the writer says:—

"It is as well to remind oneself that the charitable enterprise upon which our readers are invited to embark is wholly commendable. Its desired fruits are the wherewithal to help blind people to help themselves, to enable them to go to books upon all manner of subjects (including music), and to glean knowledge for themselves, to cultivate, in fact, a healthy spirit of independence. No one who has ever visited a school for small blind children can forget how from the very first years these little people, who could, by a misplaced sympathy, be made helplessly dependent on others, are taught to step out boldly and not to grope along. It is this spirit that actuates all their training, and which enables them later to spend a life of useful activity according to their capabilities. It is not charity, in the restricted sense, that is asked on their behalf, but merely contributions according to the donor's means to help meet the huge cost of printing braille books of letterpress and music notation."

PERSONALITIES

IN THE WORLD OF THE BLIND

FREDERICK LE GROS CLARK



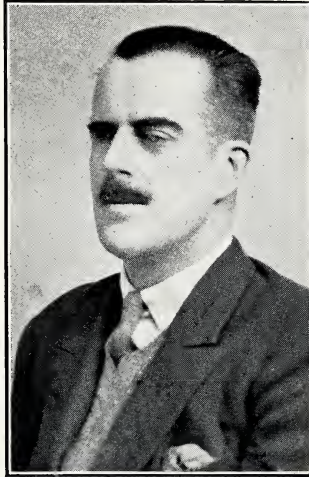
MR. FREDERICK LE GROS CLARK has from time to time contributed articles to the BEACON which have been much appreciated. Those who have read "The Blind Men of Robert Louis Stevenson" and "The Blind Chief of Mexico" will realise that he knows well how to select interesting subjects and how to treat them in an original manner. Likewise he is a novelist of no mean order, and altogether a man "of many parts."

He was born on September 3rd, 1892, at Chislet, a little village situated among the marshes of the Isle of Thanet. For two or three hundred years his family had been merchants in the City of London. One of his ancestors by marriage with a Jersey woman introduced the name "le Gros." Both his grandfathers were, however, doctors and scientists. One of them, of the same name, was President of the Royal College of Surgeons, and wrote largely on medical subjects. The other, Dr. Edward Clapton, was an authority on mysticism and the author of several curious works on this subject. Other members of his family are following the medical profession, and his brother is now Professor of Anatomy at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and has carried out important researches with regard to the anatomy of apes and of pre-historic man. His father was in the Church. During Clark's childhood there were many moves, for the family went from Kent to London, thence in turn to Hertfordshire and Gloucester, and later to the Forest of Dean, where his mother died when he was twelve years old. He was educated at a school at Gloucester and at the Wells House, Malvern, where Mr. E. P. Frederick, who has since attained celebrity as a preparatory schoolmaster, was just beginning his experiments in the "strenuous" training of boys. After his mother's death the family

moved to Devonshire and lived at a village a few miles from Tiverton. Here, when thirteen and fourteen years of age, he won two scholarships to Blundell School, well known by name to readers of "Lorna Doone." Five years later he secured a scholarship to Balliol College, Oxford, where he devoted himself to classical studies. Throughout his school and university life his interest was persistently concerned with studies not usually recognised in the curriculum; while it was necessary for him to get a knowledge of Latin and Greek,

he found himself far more deeply absorbed in literature generally and in the history of religions and civilisations. This interest expanded later into the study of the sciences—psychology, biology, and, later still, geology. At Oxford he found himself greatly influenced by such lecturers as Professor Murray and Dr. Macdougall, then Reader in Psychology to the University.

Whether or no these rather unorthodox studies would have allowed Clark to gain a good place in his final examinations is doubtful. In any case the war intervened. He had for the first time been studying something of modern politics and economics whither his



FREDERICK LE GROS CLARK

interests were now leading him, and had anticipated that, with another year's hard work, he could have passed into the Civil Service and there searched for some position in which he could begin to exercise his particular qualities and fondness for investigation. He looked upon the war as a human tragedy, but felt, too, that it was necessary to take part in it. Almost immediately he joined a New Army Battalion of the Middlesex—the 16th—as a private, and until the latter part of 1915 was training in Surrey, Nottinghamshire and on Salisbury Plain. A small volume, "Diary of a Dead Officer," published just after the war, refers several times to Clark, recalling, in one instance, his "wit and oddity" which, it says, endeared him to everyone in his

platoon. The author, A. G. West, who was his intimate friend, was afterwards killed on the Somme. Towards the end of 1915 the battalion went to France and became part of the 33rd Division. He was with it for seven or eight months, chiefly on the La Bassée sector of the line. He went through several bombardments, and finally, when the Somme offensive was approaching, and the authorities were fearing a shortage of officers, he, with a number of others in the Battalion, was offered a commission. During the summer he went through the regular course of training at Lychfield in Staffordshire, and in the early autumn he joined the Hampshire Regiment as a Second Lieutenant.

War Experiences.

Almost immediately he was drafted out to the 1st Hampshires who were just going into the Somme Offensive. He remained in France for the next eighteen months, was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant, and on various occasions took command of his Company. At one period he was given the direction of a German Prisoner of War Section engaged in forestry. This he inclined to think of as among the most pleasant times the war brought to him, as he says, "it humanised one's enemy, and that is always a good thing."

In April, 1918, orders were issued that officers who had been more than eighteen months in France should be drafted into Home Service, and Clark returned to England on the day of the great German Offensive. The Company which he had been commanding in the Arras Sector was very badly cut up, and probably the orders to return meant a narrow escape. He was sent off to his reserve battalion at Portsmouth, where he became an instructor in tactics and bombing. It was at Portsmouth that his misfortune occurred; a bombing accident deprived him of his right hand and gravely injured his eyesight. After undergoing various operations at Netley Hospital and St. Thomas's Hospital, he realised that his sight was almost certainly irretrievably affected and might even fail still more. From the very first week of his injury he had been in touch with Sir Arthur Pearson, and it was very clear that the right thing for him to do was to go to St. Dunstan's and apply himself to the task of adapting himself to a new kind of life.

Writing as a Profession.

It was Sir Arthur who encouraged him to think of writing as a profession. He began

by writing some short stories and decided to try his luck with one which had been passed as suitable by the "Chief." It was, as Sir Arthur had judged would be probable, accepted and published. Clark had been testing the possibility of opening up a business as an insurance broker, but owing to the post-war slump there were many real difficulties with which to contend, and he decided to settle down and write in earnest. After a few sporadic successes he began—in the spring of 1921—to have his stories and articles accepted more regularly. He moved from Battersea to St. George's Square, Victoria, and began to take part in the literary and artistic life of London. In June, 1921, he married Miss Ida Seale, the daughter of a well-known sculptor. Subsequently his short stories and articles were published in a large number of periodicals including the *Strand Magazine*, the *Cornhill Magazine*, the *Westminster Gazette*, *John o' London's Weekly* and *The Passing Show*. Last year his first novel was published by Messrs. Knopf. "Apparition" is a book in which the author endeavours to express the strain and the conflicting emotions of the post-war world. Into it he weaves many London scenes which suggest the conflict of ideals and opinions that is at work in modern society. The novel was most favourably reviewed by periodicals of all shades of opinion. A well-known writer, Mr. A. Neil Lyons, learning of the author's handicap, suggested in the *Bookman* that possibly deprivation of sight may have stimulated the psychological understanding shown in this novel. This is a contentious point, but at least one might suggest that an inquiring brain like his would naturally concentrate its energies on those channels of research still left open to it, e.g., on psychology and social problems. Actually he had for some time undertaken a personal study of social and political issues in London and elsewhere. The opportunity of standing for Parliament in the Labour interest was offered him more than once, but he preferred to develop his energies along the lines of fiction-writing, lecturing and educational work. He still lectures occasionally at various philosophical and political societies. At one time he contributed reviews and psychological articles to periodicals of a Labour character. The results of much of this experience are concentrated in "Apparition," which is, however, in no sense autobiographical. No political views are emphasized in the novel, since the author has made every effort to

present a balanced, impersonal picture of life to-day.

Difficulties of a Blind Author.

Probably he has now to thank that inquisitive and curious temperament that, in his younger days, led him into such a wide course of research. The stored-up information combined with an excellent memory and a good power of visualisation, all serve him well in his present pursuits. Writing is only work for a blinded man in a limited sense. It is possible to write, but the task of revision and correction demands assistance and also requires a special method. This introduces the factor of communal work, since a blinded man needs help. And Clark is inclined to say that in writing—usually, of course, a solitary job—the objection felt at having someone frequently at one's elbow is one of the greatest difficulties to be overcome by the blind author. This is not a technical but a mental difficulty, and here we come to the problem of adaptation. A blinded man has to achieve a vast amount of adaptation to life, and the "spiritual" is always more difficult than the technical adaptation. It was partly this that led him to a concentrated study of modern psychology. It is one of his ambitions to examine the enormous question of how best a disabled person may adapt himself most happily to life. If later he can undertake this matter, readers of the BEACON may be able to help greatly by pooling all their experiences and slowly building up a knowledge of the spiritual lives of blind people from which conclusions may be drawn of benefit to future generations. He looks forward to the day when those who are permanently disabled will not only receive technical training, but also attend psychological clinics. At such clinics they would be enabled to discuss fully with trained and sympathetic specialists the whole question of facing life afresh. Adaptation comes gradually to most people, but by this means it may be hastened and improved beyond all recognition.

Another Novel Forthcoming.

We have already referred to his articles in the BEACON, which were chiefly upon the blind men of history and literature and upon the folk-lore of blindness. At present he is at work upon fresh fiction, and hopes to have at least one volume published in the coming year.

He has few hobbies beyond his work and his interest in science and in various shades of

political thought. The collecting and singing of folk-songs in a group of friends is one of his great pleasures, and his wife is well known in many London circles for her singing of folk-songs to the accompaniment of the guitar.

The secret of life appears to him to lie in becoming sociable and in sharing the interests and meditations of every type of man and woman. To some degree, he says, it is necessary to live in other men's lives, and failure lies in growing solitary and self-absorbed.



CONFERENCES ON BEHALF OF THE BLIND

WE read in the *Esperanta Ligilo* that two introductory conferences on behalf of the blind are shortly to be held in Vienna, the first of which is preparatory to the World Congress which is to take place during 1931. The Congress is to be conducted under the auspices of the International Association of Blind Students, and admission to the Preparatory Conference is available only to those official delegates authorised to represent the various states concerned. Five languages, including Esperanto, are to be used in the course of the deliberations. The discussions will extend over a period of three days, from the 14th to the 17th July. The Conference is in no way related to the forthcoming Congress of Blind Esperantists in Buda-Pest.

The second preliminary conference has been arranged to take place in Vienna at the end of July preparatory to the Buda-Pest Congress.



You can always get what you want by appealing to people's emotions. But unless you've touched their intelligence they'll regret their decision afterwards.

Alec Waugh.

No hourglass, no diary, can estimate for you the "fulness of time"; it is the soul that fills it; if the soul lie asleep, it is not filled at all; if she be awake, in the vigils of suspense, of sorrow, of aspiration, there may be more in an hour than you can find in a dozen empty lives.

J. Martineau.

OPENING AND DEDICATION OF COURT GRANGE

Gift of the Rev. A. T. and Mrs. Dence opened as Blind Babies' Home.



ON Thursday, May 16th, Captain Sir Beachcroft Towse, V.C., K.C.V.O., C.B.E., Chairman of the National Institute for the Blind, presided at the opening and dedication of Court Grange, Abbotskerswell, South Devon. It will be remembered that this beautiful house was given to the National Institute in perpetuity by the Rev. A. T. Dence and Mrs. Dence in response to a public appeal when the first Sunshine Home for Blind Babies, established at Chorley Wood, Herts., was burnt to the ground last September. The house was given primarily to supply the immediate need of a home for blind babies, but in the future it may be used, strictly for the blind, for any suitable branch of the Institute's work.

The Dedication Service was conducted by the Rev. Canon C. E. Bolam, a Member of the Institute's Executive Council, assisted by the Rev. T. C. Walters, M.A., the Rev. G. C. Pope, and the Rev. F. Gordon Campbell. The Rev. Prebendary S. R. Carden was also present. The words of the Dedication were: "I dedicate this Home to the glory of God and for the service of His children. May His divine blessing rest on the giver of this Home, on those for whom it is given, and all who minister to them." The Lesson was from the 18th chapter of St. Matthew.

Sir Beachcroft Towse afterwards said they were assembled there in consequence of the great generosity of the Rev. and Mrs. Dence in presenting that home for the use of the

blind. He was very sorry to say that Mr. Dence was not with them, and they would all join with him and the Council of the National Institute in offering their deepest sympathy to Mrs. Dence and her family and expressing the hope that he might very shortly be so far restored to health as to be able to see the happy work that was taking place in those beautiful grounds and home. Many people, as they knew, were very generous after death, but on this occasion Mr. Dence, with the full permission—not only permission but willingness of the family—had presented to the National Institute the beautiful house and grounds to be used in some way for the

cause of the blind. It was now being used as a Babies' Home. The National Institute had three of these Babies' Homes in the country—one in the North, one in the Midlands and one in the South. Mr. Dence came forward at a most timely occasion, when one of their

This tablet is placed here
by the National Institute for
the Blind in gratitude to the
REVEREND ARTHUR T. DENCE
who when his Family had gone
out into the World gave this
House to Blind Members of the
British Family that they might
find in it Happiness and Peace

COMMEMORATION TABLET AT COURT GRANGE.

Homes was burnt. They were assembled to pay official recognition of thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Dence and family for their generous gift.

They kept the babies in these Homes from birth up to the age of seven. From five to seven years of age was a most retentive age, and the babies when they left the Homes had not only something to remember, but also some rudiments of religion and of the deeper things which in this life it was necessary to have to become good citizens. They were taught cleanliness, religion and orderliness of habit and mind. Some of them might know what it meant when, through no fault of their

own, they had children to look after when they had neither the time nor the means to do so, and these Homes were a blessing. If a blind child was left to its parents, who could not afford the time to look after it, the child was either neglected in the way of learning independence or was spoilt. At the Home there was no difficulty one way or the other. For whatever purpose the Home might be used in the future he earnestly hoped that those who lived in the neighbourhood would have cause to be proud of it, and he hoped, with the members of the Council, that very shortly Mr. Dence would recover to realise the great gratitude and pleasure which his great gift had given to all the inmates. He trusted that, whoever might be the inmates of the home in the future, they would always give gratitude to Mr. Dence and his family for their generosity, and also thankfulness to Almighty God that they had been fortunate enough to be occupants of the Home.

Mr. Arthur Dence, whose words rang with a sincerity that left a deep impression on his hearers, said much had been said about the generosity of this gift, and the family were proud that their father should have found it in his heart to make the gift. The family backed him absolutely in his action. He would like to mention another side. He knew personally the extreme pleasure and joy the gift had brought to his father; it had been his stay through the valley of the shadow of death. In the name of his father he asked those in the district to co-operate with him and that wonderful society in doing all possible for the blind children, so that in time to come they

might be able to look back on a happy childhood, such as most of those present had had, and look forward to a hopeful and happy future.

One of the blind babies was led forward to Miss Phyllis Dence with a bouquet and presented it to her with the words: "I've brought you these booful flowers."

A commemorative tablet (designed by the London County Council Central School of Arts and Crafts, and executed by Mr. G. T. Friend) was afterwards unveiled, and is here reproduced.

The visitors, who numbered between 250 and 300, were afterwards the guests of Mrs. Dence to tea.

The sun shone brilliantly all the afternoon, and the babies enjoyed the beautiful weather as much as anyone; especially were they happy in climbing into Sir Beachcroft's arms and clinging round his legs!

A film of the proceedings was taken by the Topical Film Co., Ltd., for inclusion in the "Topical Budget," which is shown throughout the country. The visitors seemed charmed with the surroundings, and expressed admiration of the arrangements made for the babies in the house.

Sir Beachcroft was supported on the platform by Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Dence, Miss Phyllis Dence, the Misses Audrey, Joan and Ruth Dence, and Mrs. Arnold; by the following representatives of the National Institute: Mr. A. J. W. Kitchen (Hon. Treasurer), Mr. H. J. Wagg (Member of Council), Mr. W. McG. Eagar (Secretary-General), Mrs. Claremont (Appeals Secretary, Blind Babies' Homes), and Mr. S. M. Taylor (Secretary of the South Western



CAPTAIN SIR BEACHCROFT TOWSE, V.C., ENJOYING HIMSELF WITH THE "COURT GRANGE" BABIES

Counties Branch of the Institute) who was responsible for all the arrangements; by the following representatives of local organizations for the blind: Mr. F. Dobson (Chairman, Devon County Association for the Blind), Miss L. King (Hon. Sec., Western Counties Association), Miss M. Pinn (Matron, West of England Institution), Mr. and Mrs.

Hammond (Superintendent and Matron, Plymouth Institution) and Mrs. Johns (Torquay Home Teaching Society); and the following members of the Court Grange staff: Miss Johnstone (Matron), Dr. David Wilson (Hon. Ophthalmic Surgeon), Mr. Sellars (Hon. Dentist), Mr. R. A. Rogers (Architect and Surveyor) and Dr. Tanner (Hon. Medical Officer).

BLIND GIRL GUIDES

MANY people are ignorant of the fact that there are companies of blind girls in the Girl Guides. A very interesting article appeared in a recent issue of the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, and the following extracts prove how keen blind children are on any activity which is attractive to other children. Many people insist on treating the blind as abnormal beings. But they should remember that a vast number of them are only so because of their astonishing feats of memory and their ability to take part in recreations from which one might imagine their handicap hopelessly debarred them.

* * *

“‘Courage is the thing. All goes if courage goes.’ I was forcibly reminded of the memorable words of Sir James Barrie in a famous speech when I visited for the first time the small company of blind Girl Guides who meet once a week at the Royal Blind School in Manchester Road. Courage is undoubtedly an attribute they possess in no small degree.

“There are fifteen blind ‘Guiders’ in all, and their ages range from 10 to 13 years; all are boarders at the Royal Blind School, Manchester Road, and their healthy and well-kept appearance bears indisputable evidence of the excellent care which is given to them in that institution.

“The company was formed last October, and proves a very popular part of the recreation for the blind girls, who seem to extract any amount of fun and enjoyment from it. The work, however, has other value besides providing enjoyable recreation for them, for doubtless they must benefit physically and mentally by the training which, as everyone who is cognisant with Guide lore knows, covers so wide a field of activities.

“The most marvellous achievement of this little company, I imagine, is their reading of morse by simply ‘listening’ to the flag. The leader stood in the middle of the room with the flag, and the girls picked out words with comparative ease from what was merely a series of unintelligible ‘flaps’ to the uninitiated. The keenness of their hearing was exemplified in several other tests which took the form of games.

“The keenest of interest was manifest on every face, and I noticed these little blind girls indulged in surreptitious poking and prodding and other mild forms of ‘ragging’ just the same as other youngsters.

“Another interesting memory test in which the girls showed remarkable prowess was when twelve common objects were placed on a table and the girls told to touch and memorise each one, and then recite the list afterwards; quite a difficult feat, I find, even when one is possessed of all one’s faculties.

“Another game from which the Guides seemed to extract a great amount of amusement was singing action songs, omitting the words, and performing the actions instead. And yet another which showed how plainly things must be impressed on their minds, was a game of Hidden Words, when the leader read out sentences which contained concealed names. When one considers sometimes in puzzles of this kind one has to look more than twice at the printed words to find the hidden word, one realises how plainly those little people can visualise the written words.

“Of course, the Guides do not play all the time; their cleverness in basket-making, for instance, is only one of many things they do exceptionally well, but even if the Company of Guides had only been formed to provide them with recreation the effort would have been very well worth while.”

GREATER LONDON FUND FOR THE BLIND

THE great event of the month of April—"Geranium Day," April 9th—dawned dull and wet, but fortunately the sun came out later. Capt. Sir Beachcroft Towse, V.C., K.C.V.O., C.B.E., accompanied by Alderman W. W. Kelland, Chairman of the "Geranium Day" Sub-Committee, visited a number of the Depots and cheered the workers; but Lady Towse, whose serious illness prevented her from taking her usual depot, was greatly missed. The ranks of the keen Committee of the Barclay Workshops closed over the gap created by Lady O'Dwyer's withdrawal, but there were only too many old friends whose places were vacant this year. In thanking them for their help in the past, the organisers would express the hope that there may be no need to bemoan their absence again, and to those who fell out through various troubles and illness during the trying winter would wish consolation and a speedy convalescence.

One new friend who tore herself from a sick bed was Miss Violet Loraine, whose picture on her river "beat" is here reproduced.

The response to the "Geranium Day" appeal was upwards of £7,000.

During the month, four Masonic Lodges welcomed Mr. H. C. Preece, in addition to numerous other gatherings, notably, before "Geranium Day," the annual address to the Baptist Church Brotherhood, Streatham, in connection with that event, so ably conducted by Mr. W. H. Head, the energetic Hon. Sec. of the Streatham "Helpers of the Blind."

Another event of the same Sunday was a repetition of last year's successful concert at the Rialto Cinema, Leytonstone.

The Kenley Hall was filled on the 15th for the concert organised by that staunch and practical friend of the Fund, Mrs. Newman, when her clever daughter, with some of her friends, once again contributed an amusing sketch, songs and monologues to the programme provided by the blind artistes.

The G.L.F. artistes were also helped at Ickenham by the youngest "Helper of the Blind," who gave a solo dance. The members of this Circle are to be congratulated on their fine record; for this annual concert was as successful, both socially and financially, as before: they had increased their "Geranium Day" contribution the previous week; and once again sold at the performance twenty pound's worth of goods supplied by the Home Industries' Department, Swiss Cottage. The speaker was Mr. E. H. Williams.



MISS VIOLET LORAINÉ SELLING GERANIUMS FROM A BARGE IN THE THAMES

Blind artistes provided the entire programme at New Malden on the 25th, when Mrs. Norrington and Mrs. Spiers secured a large audience who gave generously to the Fund. Better still, Mr. Preece's speech has resulted in the formation of a new "Helpers of the Blind" Circle.

The month closed with a special performance of "The Rising Generation" given by the Eagle Dramatic and Operatic Society at the People's Palace, Mile End Road.

The most successful engagement of all has been left to the last, because it is really an overflow from the month of March; that

is the splendid concert organised by Mrs. Pitt, at Ilford on March 25th.

The magnificent Town Hall of that Borough was crammed to overflowing, with so many standing that it was well the Mayor was present to take the responsibility. His Worship presided over a short meeting in the interval, when the principal speaker was Sir George Hamilton, J.P., M.P. He had been busy for the Fund at his Club before entering the Hall, and quickly made up the sum he had brought to £20. The collection which followed, and various donations secured by Mrs. Pitt, raised the grand total to £60 7s. od. Not only did that most practical of friends of the Fund produce this splendid contribution, but she persuaded many members of the audience to help on "Geranium Day," which she organised in the Borough of Ilford as successfully as usual.



THE BLIND IN EDINBURGH

"THE LANCET" in a recent issue draws attention to the new Home for Blind Women which has been established in Edinburgh. Over 40 women are in residence. There will ultimately be room for double that number, the occupants being drawn from all parts of Scotland. They are capable of doing work appropriate to the blind, but of course there remains the great problem of the unemployable blind. The estimated number runs to over 300 in immediate need of better residential accommodation. This number is not large; but, as for other chronic and incurable conditions, the accommodation has to be determined by the numbers multiplied into the expectation of life. The problem of the blind is thus on all fours with the very difficult problem of encephalitis lethargica, which produces a small number of permanently disabled.

It is gratifying to learn that the number of blind due to gonorrhoeal ophthalmia show signs of reduction within the last few years. The cases admitted to the Edinburgh School are a mere fraction of what they were ten years ago. This fairly corresponds to the experience of the clinics.

Edinburgh differs from the west in that the city has not taken over the voluntary organisation. In the west, Glasgow and several neighbouring authorities some years ago formed a combination to take over the whole institutions and organisations then managing the blind. This is competent under the Blind Persons Act. The management of

the institutions is now much more satisfactory. In Edinburgh, however, the Royal Blind Asylum and School have been exceptionally well conducted, and the city, which has always been represented on the management, continues to give generous support. The present new building has been erected partly by voluntary subscriptions, but largely by contributions from some five or six local authorities and from a Government grant. So long as there is this cordial co-operation between the three types of authority—central, local, and voluntary—there is no case for reform. The Health Department for Scotland appoint, for the whole country, an advisory committee representing all interests. Through the activities of this committee, the whole Scottish problem of the blind, both indoor and outdoor, has been carefully studied, and all forms of organisation have been immensely improved. Some time ago the League of Nations took up the question of the better management of the blind, and Scotland was represented at a Staff Conference in Geneva to discuss details. The Scottish Department had issued a questionnaire for home use, but the League has instituted an international inquiry. As a small country, Scotland is favourably placed for dealing with a circumscribed problem of this kind. At any rate, her experiences may be of service to the other small nations.



GLASGOW MISSION TO OUTDOOR BLIND

IN the annual report of the Mission to the Outdoor Blind for Glasgow and the West of Scotland it is stated that during the past year there was a considerable increase in the number of blind persons under the care of the Mission. It is pointed out that the Joint Committee of Local Authorities gave a grant of £1,000 towards the expenses incurred in home teaching, but that the sum did not cover the expenditure. The contributions received amounted to £3,406, but the sum of £4,562 was spent in direct benevolence among the sightless. A great part of the work of the Mission is only made possible by voluntary assistance, and the directors pay grateful tribute to the subscribers for their continued support.

The superintendent states in his report that there are now 3,492 blind persons under the care of the Mission. During the year there were added to the library 191 volumes, of which 67 are in the Braille type and 124 in the Moon type.

BRaille READING COMPETITION

"E. W. AUSTIN MEMORIAL"



THE Ninth Annual Reading Competition was held on May 4th, at the National Library for the Blind, Westminster. Preliminary testings had resulted in twelve candidates being selected to read the difficult passages in the Finals, when Professor Gilbert Murray, Professor de Selincourt, and Mr. Bassett Roe had kindly consented to act as judges. Mr. Walter de la Mare and Mr. Fisher White were regrettably prevented from being present.

There was a special class held to compete for the second silver medal, which was open to the eight winners of Class "A" in previous years, and Mr. Bassett Roe was good enough to come to the Library in the morning to hear the preliminary readings of these candidates.

Professor Gilbert Murray, in announcing the names of the winners, spoke of the power of the human mind to conquer difficulties and congratulated the competitors on the ease and facility with which they had read.

Miss Green's Achievement

The Medal was awarded to Miss K. M. Green, who won it in 1924, and has thus beaten all comers. Her interpretation of Walter Raleigh's passage on "John Dryden and Political Satire," taken from "Some Authors," delighted all hearers. Miss Jameson and the Rev. W. J. Carter ran her very close.

The "Blanesburgh" Silver Cup and the first prize in Class "A" were awarded to Miss Last for her charming rendering of an extract from Sidney Smith's "Travellers' Tales," and Wordsworth's "Within King's College Chapel, Cambridge." Miss Johns was awarded the second prize, and Miss Osborne and Mrs. Hughes tied for the third place.

The Senior Juniors' (12—15) First Prize was won by Nettie Rinder from the Elm Court School, the Second Prize by Joyce Middleton from the East London School, and a Consolation Prize by Frank Saunders from the Enfield Road School; and the Juniors' (under 12) by Ernest Harling of the Enfield Road School, closely followed by Joan Driver from the same School, and Billy Middleton of the East London School.

Lord Shaw of Dunfermline presented the prizes, to which Dr. Oswald Fergus had added a box of chocolates for each of the six successful Juniors.

Lord Shaw's Address

After speaking a few congratulatory words to each prize winner Lord Shaw in an impressive address referred to the fact that this year marks the centenary of the introduction of Braille type as the recognised reading system for the blind in France. Having given a brief account of the life and work of Louis Braille, he concluded by saying:—

"Never in his most enthusiastic moments, could Louis Braille have foreseen the future developments of his system.

"Perhaps not the least interesting of these is the competition you have just witnessed. It is difficult to imagine a higher testimony to the efficiency of Braille than that a number of men, women, and children, should venture to read, before you all, passages which they had not previously rehearsed.

"The Braille system was introduced into England in, or about, the year 1869."

Lord Shaw then proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Walter Dixon, who founded the Reading Competition in memory of Miss E. W. Austin.

Mr. Dixon in replying, proposed hearty votes of thanks to the Judges, the donors of the flowers with which the Library was decorated, and the Staff of the Library.

Dr. Evans seconded these, and thanked Lord Shaw most warmly for coming to the Library and presenting the prizes.

Exhibition of Books

An exhibition of books kindly lent by the Association Valentin-Häuy in Paris, and arranged by Miss Jameson, showing examples of early embossed type, was on view. This included the "Barbier" Alphabet; also volumes showing that Braille type was used for music notation before being introduced for literature, and a copy of *L'Imitation de Jesus Christ*, the first book ever printed in Braille type, and stereotyped in Paris in 1849.

NEWS FROM FRANCE



THE following article has been contributed to the *Esperanta Ligilo* by a blind ex-service man with the request that it should be translated for the interest and information of other countries:—

Until twelve years ago there was in France no specific organisation for dealing with the interests of the blind community. In 1917 a society for the benefit of civilians and ex-service men was inaugurated under the title of "Amitié des Aveugles de France" (Friendship of the Blind of France). In December, 1918, was founded the "Union des Aveugles de Guerre" (Union of the War Blind), whose membership includes only those men whose loss of sight is attributable to service in the Great War. Of the 2,400 blind ex-service men now living, the Society numbers approximately 2,200, many of whom are also members of the Civilian Society, the two organisations working in close co-operation. A second society dealing with the interests of the civilian population, and known as the National Union of the Civilian Blind, has now been established. On this Society the duty devolves of representing the needs of the blind community to the respective local authorities. The "Friendship" Society is principally concerned with the general welfare of the civilian population, while the interests of the ex-service men are served by their own special organisation. Through the medium of this Society much valuable assistance is rendered to its members and to their widows and children. A considerable portion of the work involved is undertaken by the various municipal authorities, who have striven zealously year by year to improve the prevailing social conditions.

Following is a brief survey of the benefits accruing to blind ex-service men:—Each man receives a minimum of 19,700 francs, which sum is comprised of a State pension and other additional contributions. Men who have also lost the use of one limb receive annually the sum of 26,100 francs, while those who have lost both limbs in the war are entitled to 40,200 francs from the State Exchequer. Except in the case of officers, the amount of increase in pension according to rank is almost negligible. The State also contributes an additional sum of 1,000 francs in respect of

every child under the age of eighteen, and each man is entitled to free medical advice, drugs, etc., provided that the injury or malady is directly attributable to war service. On the death of the husband the widow receives an annual pension of 2,860 francs and 1,000 francs are paid in respect of each orphan under eighteen years of age. A Rest Home by the sea, under the auspices of this Society, is available for the benefit of its members and their families during the summer months. This organisation also renders financial assistance in the cases of acquiring or repairing country cottages for the men and their families, and grants monetary aid in certain cases of illness or maternity.

Disabled ex-service men using the French railways enjoy the privilege of a 75 per cent. reduction on the normal fare, while their guides are permitted to travel free of cost. Both in the City and the Provinces similar arrangements are in force with regard to trams, omnibuses and the Metropolitan service. These advantages have now been extended to the civilian blind of Paris.

It will thus be readily agreed that much valuable work has been accomplished during the past ten years. The marked progress that has taken place has rendered possible the re-education of the blind ex-service man, enabling him to enjoy the blessing of labour along professional or industrial lines. A certain percentage of blind ex-service men obtain employment in various factories, particularly in cases where they can operate small machines used in the processes of cutting, boring and stamping. The wages derived from such experimental work serve to supplement the workers' income, but are totally insufficient as a means of subsistence. Numerous welfare organisations have since been established which extend their activities to the whole of the blind community by printing Braille books and periodicals.

The Headquarters of the Ex-Service Men's Society are situated in Paris, and the organisation publishes its own journal. The Society is assisted to some extent from the State revenue, but is mainly dependent upon private donations. It is hoped that an international society for ex-service men will eventually be established.

RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

WE learn from the Blind Asylum in Merrion, County Dublin, known as the "Sisters of Charity," that four of their pupils won six medals at the Feis Ceoil, the principal Irish musical festival held annually in Dublin.

* * *

THE Society for the Encouragement of Verse, Paris, has awarded its bronze medal to the deaf-blind poet, M. Marcel Andre-Bellot, 19, Rue de L'Enclos Rey, Lime, Gard, France, for his war poem, "Flowers of Blood." M. Bellot is the author of a book of French verse.

* * *

IT is a pleasure to be able to record that Mr. C. Beveridge of Mitcham, a blind man, has secured a contract for the tuning of pianos for the Surrey County Council. This contract will find him ample work throughout the year.

* * *

SUCCESSSES achieved by Eric G. Dowdell the blind son of a master of a Willesden elementary school, were, according to the *Daily Sketch*, referred to at a recent meeting of Middlesex Education Committee.

Mr. Dowdell's achievements include: First class in Final Honours School of Modern History; first class in Final Honours School of Politics, Philosophy and Economics, known as the Modern Greats; M.A.; and Doctor of Philosophy.

* * *

AT the recent Examination of the Royal Academy of Music, Robert Savage of the Royal Normal College, Upper Norwood, passed the Licentiate Examination as a Teacher of Pianoforte Playing.

An interesting fact regarding the Croydon Musical Festival, which took place last month, was the conspicuous successes of blind girls from the Royal Normal College. In the Singing Competition there were thirty-four Candidates, and Dorothy Allen gained a Gold Medal for obtaining the highest marks. 52 Candidates entered for the Piano Playing Competition for Juniors under the age of sixteen, the first place was awarded to Joan Hewlett (Silver Medal) and the second to Margaret Brand (Bronze Medal). Joan Hewlett not only gained a Silver Medal for being highest in her class, but was also awarded a

Gold Medal for obtaining the highest marks of any Candidate in any Class for Piano Playing.

This is excellent testimony to the high standard of Musical Training received at the College.



SCHOLARSHIPS FOR THE BLIND

JULY, 1929

THE next Examination for Gardner Trust Scholarships of the annual value of £40, tenable at the Royal Normal College for the Blind, Upper Norwood, S.E.19, will be held on Saturday the 6th and Monday the 8th of July. Candidates must have reached the age of sixteen on or before the date of the Examination, must have resided in England or Wales for the last five years and be intending to remain so resident. Application should be made to the Principal on or before Saturday the 22nd of June, and the Forms properly filled in and completed, returned to the College on or before Saturday the 29th of June, or the Candidate's name will not be placed on the list.



OBITUARY

AFTER 53 years' service in the parish, the Rev. Norman Frederick McNeile, the blind vicar of Brafferton, Yorkshire, has died at the age of 83. Despite his handicap, Mr. McNeile was able to go about the church unaided and to perform most of his parochial duties.

* * *

A SHORT time ago we recorded the Centenary of Mrs. Hester Berton, the oldest resident of the North London Homes for the Blind. We are now informed that Mrs. Berton passed away on Sunday, April 14th.

* * *

DR. ALFRED SALTER, treasurer of the London Labour Party, announces that Mr. Harry Mann, of Deptford, who has just died, under his will left £400 to the London Labour Party.

Mr. Mann, who for many years was a member of the Social Democratic Federation, was in many respects a remarkable personality. He was a builders' labourer who worked all his life under the handicap of blindness.

NATIONAL BABY WEEK COUNCIL

THE value of the work undertaken to protect and increase the health of our babies cannot be overestimated. Twelve years ago the National Baby Week Council was inaugurated, and its work and influence have steadily increased since that time. Its activities include propaganda of all description; film displays, lectures and addresses are given; local Baby Weeks, Health and Baby Weeks, Health Weeks, Baby Days and Baby Competitions are organised and, in many cases, the major part of the local Health Weeks' programme is devoted to maternity and child welfare questions. Some indication of the extent of the Council's activities during the year may be gathered from the fact that nearly 39,000 communications were dealt with, and that assistance was given to 622 local Baby and Health Weeks, Competitions, etc., as compared with 564 in the preceding year.

National Baby Week was held from July 1st to July 7th, and included a Conference on Maternity and Child Welfare at the Guildhall, London, organised by the National Association for the Prevention of Infant Mortality. In connection with the Conference a display of propaganda films was arranged by the Council and was attended by an audience of 800 persons. During the week a poster parade took place through the main thoroughfares of London, and Baby Sunday, which fell on July 1st, and thus introduced Baby Week, received far greater attention than hitherto from clergy of all denominations.

Challenge shields for the best Baby Week campaign held throughout the Empire were again competed for, the shield for this purpose donated by the *News of the World*, was this time awarded by the Council to the Baby Week Committee of Benoni, Transvaal.

It should be noted that the Council now issues fifty-five different propaganda leaflets and pamphlets, and also publishes propaganda plays and films for use in cinemas, halls and welfare centres.

AN orchestra of blind ex-Servicemen will play on Derby Day in the great marquee, which will be provided at Epsom for patrons of the St. Dunstan's Day motor coach service.

NEW PUBLICATIONS IN MOON TYPE

IT is proposed to publish limited editions in Moon type of the nine works listed below. They will appear during the months of July to December, and anyone wishing to secure copies should order them at once from the National Institute for the Blind from whom order forms are obtainable on application.

	Vols.
"Elizabeth and her German Garden," by Countess Russell	3
"The Gaunt Stranger," by Edgar Wallace	5
"Love, the Master-Key," by Annie S. Swan	6
"A Cathedral Courtship," by Kate B. Wiggin	1
"His Second Venture," by Mrs. B. Reynolds	6
"The Mysterious Rider," by Zane Grey	7
"The Holiday," by C. Lenanton	6
"Bindle," by Herbert Jenkins	5
"The Trumpet Major," by Thomas Hardy	8

The volumes will be strongly bound in leather boards, and are offered to foreign purchasers at cost price, viz., 12/- per volume. The following reduced prices will, however, be charged to purchasers of more than one copy of any complete work.

To Foreign Purchasers of 2 Copies	s. d.
To Foreign Purchasers of 3 or More Copies	10 6
.. .. .	9 0

Residents in the British Isles and in other parts of the British Empire will be allowed a reduction of two-thirds of the cost price on orders of one or more copies, viz., 4/- per volume.



PERSONALIA

MR. A. PLATT, who was Supervisor of the Home Industries Department of the National Institute for the Blind, in connection with their home-workers' scheme, has been appointed Manager of the Workshops for the Blind, Hull.

* * *

MR. E. BRADSHAW, of the Leicester Institution for the Blind, has been appointed Secretary-Manager of the workshops of the North Staffordshire Institution for the Care of the Blind.

* * *

THE Annual Meeting of the College of Teachers of the Blind will take place at the National Institute for the Blind on Saturday, June 8th, at 2.30 p.m.

NATURAL HISTORY LECTURES TO BLIND CHILDREN

THE Trustees of the British Museum arranged for a series of experimental demonstrations to blind children to be given at the Natural History Museum during the past few months by the guide-lecturer, Mr. J. H. Leonard.

According to *The Times*, the children were brought from the schools of various institutions for the welfare of the blind, placed round a table, and allowed to handle the specimens, mostly of animals, laid out on it, then moved from one specimen to the next, while the guide-lecturer passed from one to another talking about the specimens and giving explanations suited to the years of the pupils. The Trustees feel so convinced of the importance of this work that they have arranged for its being continued and extended. Since the exhibits in the public galleries cannot be exposed to handling, a special series of specimens is being got together and set aside for the use of the blind. There are many old specimens which have been removed from the galleries because their colours have faded, but which are just as suitable for this purpose. Later on it is hoped that, in spite of the congested state of the building, it may prove possible to set aside a room where this special collection may be kept and the demonstrations may be given. Societies interested in the welfare of the blind that wish to take advantage of the arrangements made should apply by letter to the Director, British Museum (Natural History), London, S.W.7.



THE SIGHT OF THE SOUL

"NO man would be so foolish," remarked Mr. Booth Tarkington, the American novelist, who has been blind for a year, to an interviewer from *The New York Times*, "as to say that he would like to be blind. But I cannot say that I have minded it Someone thanked God, who made him blind so that his soul could see. I have come to believe that there is a lot of truth in that. I have done more work during the past year than ever before. I have written a novel, short stories, and several essays. It is true, I believe, that being unable to see is a great aid to concentration. You are not distracted by outside elements."

THE BLIND IN FICTION

AN interesting article by Charles N. Paulin, dealing with sightless characters in fiction, appeared in a recent issue of "The Newcastle Weekly Chronicle."

"It is often the custom of our dramatists and novelists," says Mr. Paulin, "to enlist our sympathies on behalf of their heroines and heroes by making them blind. Shakespeare in 'King Lear' makes a dramatic scene of the mutilation of Gloucester's eyes, and there is always pathos in the presentation of that scene between Hubert and the little prince.

"Victorians were not slow to grasp the possibilities of a blind character, as we may see from a glance at Dickens. In 'Our Mutual Friend' the toymaker's blind daughter moves all readers' hearts by her pathetic innocence. In 'Barnaby Rudge' the rascally associate of the 'Prentice Knights is blind, though it does not appear that Dickens wished us to waste any sympathy on him.

"Charlotte Brontë's Rochester, in 'Jane Eyre' is one more instance of the same kind of thing. Previously, he has been a bullying, overbearing, bigoted fellow, but when she hears of his affliction, poor Jane is eager and willing to become his helpmate and companion, practically his slave, and all because he has been struck blind in an accident.

"Kingsley in 'Westward Ho' is responsible for what is perhaps one of the most dramatic passages in Victorian literature. Amyas Leigh has searched the main to find Don Guzman, the man who delivered his brother to the flames and the betrayer of the beautiful Rose of Torridge. He finds him at last, and when the enemy seems about to be delivered into his hands—at the longed-for moment of his life, a vivid flash of lightning deprives him of sight. In the vigour of his splendid manhood, the sea he loved so well is blotted out of his existence, and he is left a useless hulk, to spend the remainder of his days in vain regrets."



Only a smile that was given to me

On the crowded street one day,
But it pierced the gloom of my saddened heart,
Like a sudden sunbeam's ray.

The shadow of doubt hung over me,
And the burden of pain I bore,
And the voice of hope I could not hear,
Though I listened o'er and o'er.

G. Mac Donald.

THE CRAFTMANSHIP OF THE BLIND

POPULAR EXHIBIT AT NORTH-EAST COAST EXHIBITION



ONE of the most popular and interesting stands at the North East Coast Exhibition, Newcastle-on-Tyne, opened last month by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, is that devoted to work performed by blind people, in the Palace of Industries. The Prince of Wales visited the stand and was keenly interested in and appreciative of this effort to bring before the public the industries in which blind people are engaged.

The activities of blind workers during recent years have, says the *Shields Daily News*, been enlarged to a wonderful degree, and the numerous means by which blind people can earn a livelihood are surprising. An impression is abroad that basket and mat making practically constitute the limit of the blind workers ;

this is entirely erroneous. The exhibition provides the means of bringing strongly before the public the great variety of trades learned by the blind and will show that the fruits of their labour are equally as good, if not superior in craftsmanship to that of people in full possession of all their faculties.

Demonstrations will be variable in character and will be given daily right throughout the exhibition, including the making of bead curtains, chairs, baskets, knitting and handicrafts ; bed making of all description ; demonstrations of mat making, joinery, brush making, pulp cane work, basket making of all kinds, cork fender making, hand and machine knitting, etc.

The expense of running a stall has been met by substantial grants from the Northern Counties' Association for the Blind, Manchester, and the National Institute for the Blind.



THE VICTORY MEMORIAL BLIND SCHOOL, MADRAS

A PRINCIPAL WANTED

THE National Institute for the Blind has been asked to advise on the appointment of a Principal for the above new institute for the blind.

The school is being established by the Madras Association for the Blind, whose Board of Governors are contemplating the purchase of some disused military barracks, and would, if necessary, build new premises. The general plan is to provide the following accommodation :—

- (a) Preparatory School for 40 boys and 30 girls ultimately
- (b) Technical School for 40 boys and 30 girls ultimately
- (c) Factory and Settlement for 40 boys and 30 girls ultimately
- (d) Show rooms, etc., in Madras.

The Fund behind the scheme results from an appeal issued by His Excellency the Governor of Madras, and has been supplemented by

donation from the Madras Victory Memorial Committee.

The Principal should be a capable organiser and manager. Actual practical experience in teaching and training blind children is essential. The salary proposed at the current rate of exchange is approximately £75 a month, together with a free house in the precincts of the School and a free passage to Madras. The man appointed would be required to come out on a five-year contract, and to win the confidence of his pupils he would certainly have to learn the two principal dialects spoken in Madras.

Work for the blind is developing rapidly in India, and this new undertaking in Madras is likely to prove of the first importance.

Communications on the matter should be addressed to the Secretary-General, National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

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NATIONAL BABY WEEK AND BLIND BABIES

By ERIC PRITCHARD, M.D., F.R.C.P.,

Chairman of the Executive Committee of the National Baby Week Council, and Consulting Physician to the Sunshine Homes of the National Institute for the Blind.



EVER since 1917 the first week in July has been earmarked as a special period to be devoted to the interests of babies. The National Baby Week Council was founded in that year, the third of the Great War, during a time of great national anxiety, when the manhood of the country was being decimated in France, and when it was becoming clear to thinking people that the future of the race was becoming more and more dependent on the rising generation. One of the slogans industriously broadcast at that time by the Council was—"It is more dangerous to be a baby in the cradle than a soldier in the trenches." This dramatic message, if not literally true, had a large foundation of truth in it, and it had the distinct advantage of calling attention in a somewhat striking fashion to the fact that every year nearly 100,000 babies died unpeaceably in their cots for reasons which we then suspected, and now definitely know, to be for the most part preventable.

Babies Should Survive.

One of the chief reasons for the foundation of this new body—The National Baby Week Council—was to bring home, not only to parents, but to all individuals, male and female,

that it was more to their material interests that babies should survive than that they should die or become a burden on their neighbours by reason of ill-health or infirmities. I remember well, how in the first year of the Council's activities when, among other sources of help, we were seeking the assistance of all the Churches, irrespective of denomination, to preach our gospel from the pulpit on Baby Sunday, we received a cold douche to our enthusiasm from an important ecclesiastical dignitary, who told us that he was convinced that we were doing more harm than good by our methods of interference with the laws of natural selection which enabled infants to survive, who by reason of their innate infirmities were better dead.

Preventable Causes.

I have lived long enough to see for myself the ultimate destinies of many of these despaired babies. I have seen many of them grow up to confute the pessimistic opinions that were originally formed of them. I have seen them become useful and sometimes distinguished citizens and the parents of healthy children. Although a small proportion of infants may waste and atrophy owing to innate and hereditary weaknesses, which may be transmitted in descent to the next generation, I can safely say from a wide experience of these

cases, that the vast majority of them owe their troubles not to heredity, but to easily preventable causes—that they owe them to ignorance on the part of those who are responsible for their nurture—to ignorance of the correct way of feeding babies—to careless exposure to infection, and to half-a-dozen other avoidable causes which have nothing whatever to do with heredity.

The National Baby Week Council takes under its Catholic mantle all sorts and conditions of babies—not the poor and neglected only, nor yet only the rich and carefully tended. In the eyes of the Council, every baby—duke's son or cook's son—has a value to the State. If, however, there is one class of baby in which I personally take a greater interest than any other, and which I believe must appeal to all in the same way, it is the class of baby which is afflicted with blindness.

Blind Babies.

I have been very closely associated with the essentially humane efforts made by the National Institute for the Blind, to provide homes and education for these particularly helpless little children. There is nothing more pathetic than a blind baby, and there is no baby which makes an ampler return for the trouble and attention expended on it. The National Institute for the Blind, some eleven years ago, took upon its shoulders the very onerous task of attempting to provide for the needs of all the destitute blind babies in this country. It will perhaps come as a surprise to many that the entire number of totally blind babies who belong to this category are not very numerous. There are indeed plenty of partially blind babies—there are a fair number of blind babies of the upper and middle classes who can in no way be considered destitute—and there are a considerable number of blind babies who, by reason of other mental defects, are incapable of benefiting by education. The total number of blind babies for whom the National Institute for the Blind set out to cater, can at present be accommodated in the three special homes—called Sunshine Homes—which the Council has established during the last few years. One of them, which was recently burnt out, is at Chorley Wood, and will shortly be re-built. The second one is at Leamington, and the third at Southport.

The Sunshine Homes.

These three homes provide accommodation for children domiciled in the South of England,

the Midlands, and the North of England respectively. During the re-building of the Chorley Wood establishment, a very beautiful temporary home, "Court Grange" near Newton Abbot, Devonshire, has been put at the disposal of the dispossessed children by the generosity of its late owner.

One of the most difficult matters in connection with the management of these homes is to distinguish between those babies which are fit to receive the sort of education these homes provide, from those which are not suitable, for it would be useless to squander the large amount of money which is necessary for the maintenance of these children, on those who have such serious mental defects as to make such education worthless. The majority of blind babies who come before us have been so neglected that their intelligence is of very low grade. So difficult is it at times to decide this question, that the Council are very wisely proposing to devote a certain number of cots in the new home at Chorley Wood for the admission on probation of doubtful cases.

Potentialities of the Blind Babies.

During Baby Week, when the thoughts of many of us will naturally turn to the consideration of ordinary childhood—healthy, normal childhood, with all its possibilities and potentialities for happy development—surely the unhappy lot of the blind baby specially deserves our commiseration. It is a revelation to anyone visiting one of the Sunshine Homes to see how the intelligence of these little blind mites is awakened by the special methods of education which are there employed to bring about the development of those other senses which have to take the place of that of vision. Bereft of the faculty of sight, these little children have to depend on their auditory and tactile senses, which under proper educational means seem to undergo compensatory evolution. Many of them also seem to develop what may almost be regarded as an additional sense, which enables them to recognise when they are in danger of knocking against any obstacle which stands in their path. What this sense is, or how it acts, is unknown, but it is probably connected with some highly developed tactile sense which enables them to appreciate slight alterations in air pressure, or of currents of air set up by the opposing obstacle. Whatever it is, however, it is very interesting to observe, and it protects the children from what might otherwise be serious accidents. Although it may be difficult to

appreciate accurately degrees of happiness, nevertheless one cannot help coming to the conclusion that blind children have almost as great capacities for enjoyment as normal children in possession of all their senses, so long as those senses which they possess are sufficiently developed. It is in this that the Sunshine Homes do so much for the blind babies by special methods of training and education. It is our general experience to find that the little inmates of these homes in a few years attain to almost the same standard of intelligence as normal babies possessed of all their senses and brought up in the less favourable environment of the ordinary working-class homes.



INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

The Blind in Holland.

THE "Esperanta Ligilo" gives us the following information concerning the teaching and training of the blind in Holland. There are three institutions for that purpose, the first and foremost of which is situated in Amsterdam. Here the girls are trained in certain branches of manual work, special attention being given to the teaching of brush-making, basket-weaving, piano-tuning and music. The musical training available has attained an exceptionally high standard, every possible facility being placed at the disposal of the students. The Music Department is divided into ten cubicles, each containing a piano for practice purposes, and two rooms are wholly devoted to instruction and study. There is also a beautiful organ.

This Institution does not undertake juvenile instruction. Children from three to twelve years of age are received at a smaller school situated in a charming country district. No legislation for the compulsory education of the blind has as yet been introduced into Holland, and many parents refuse to send their children away to school. Whilst few consent to part with their little ones at the age of three, they can be received at the School, this arrangement having been made for the benefit of orphans. The classroom instruction covers much the same curriculum as that at the ordinary schools, with the exception of drawing and kindred subjects, which cannot be accomplished without sight. Geography is taught by means of the German embossed maps, and French apparatus is used for the teaching of arithmetic. All the instruction books used

in the ordinary schools are printed in Braille for the use of blind children in their studies.

The Institution has a Braille library stocked with more than 1,000 works consisting of approximately 5,000 volumes. In addition to their own language the pupils are taught German, French and Esperanto, and are given a specialised course of training in stenography and typewriting. Some have obtained good positions as shorthand typists, using the English Stainsby-Wayne shorthand machine for taking their notes. Useful apparatus has been invented by one of the instructors by which it is possible to emboss any particular matter which may be required for the help of the students. By means of this apparatus the ordinary musical notation has been embossed, in order to help the students in the instruction of their sighted pupils. A large number of blind organists have been successful in securing remunerative posts in connection with the various churches. The students are permitted to remain in the Institution until they have qualified in their own particular sphere of work, there being no definite age limit.

The Netherlands Association for the Blind is urgently stressing the need for compulsory education, and it is anticipated that the Government will ultimately pass the necessary legislation. There are several workshops for the blind in the various cities, but the wages paid are extremely low. It is realised that welfare work on behalf of the blind of Holland leaves much to be desired, but it is confidently hoped that the progress now being registered will result in great achievement.




United States of America.

The American Foundation for the Blind, 125, East 46th Street, New York, U.S.A., published a letter last December concerning a proposed international congress in 1930. In view, however, of the international congress arranged for 1931, this idea has been relinquished, and the Foundation's proposals are being submitted to the preliminary conference at Vienna this month. It is hoped to persuade members to decide upon New York as a suitable place for the Congress in 1931, although there is no wish to counteract the plans of any other representatives. It is hoped that all bodies working for the blind will convey their ideas on the subject to the preliminary conference.

PERSONALITIES

IN THE WORLD OF THE BLIND

SINCLAIR LOGAN—*The Man and the Artist.*

" ALWAYS completely ignore my blindness, so far as my attitude to it is concerned. I have travelled alone since I was nine, even journeying to the Continent by myself. My blindness affects me as a nuisance chiefly in the small things of life; never am I conscious of it in the big things that matter, and only very slightly when going on to a Concert platform. Socially, it does not affect me; I go to many places, make many friends, and get more than my share of the sort of romance that is dear to most of us. If there is one thing I do NOT like, it is to be regarded as a blind man. I am not blind, in the sense that I completely ignore the disability and regard it as a purely superficial matter. I find life good, full of zest and of things to be enthusiastic about."

Blindness "Ignored"

To regard the deprivation of sight more as something to be "ignored," rather than as a formidable obstacle to be for ever struggling and chafing against, is a somewhat startling way of presenting the case; yet the above are the actual words used by Mr. Logan in describing his attitude.

Mr. Logan has never actually realized any sight-consciousness, for blindness almost immediately supervened after his birth. The Merseyside claims him, as he was born (in 1897) at Liscard, Cheshire. He cannot recollect how it first dawned upon him that he in any way differed from his two brothers, though, as a very young child, it did sometimes occur to him to wonder why he should be warned of danger oftener than the others, in spite of the fact that he was usually permitted to "run wild" with his brothers and other children. When, at the age of four, his parents got dark glasses for him to wear, he did not even then fully comprehend that he was unable to see, and probably all this had the psychological and practical result of establishing that mental pose towards his disability which he describes as—"ignoring it."

In recent years most of us have learnt to

avoid referring to blindness as an "affliction," preferring rather to accept the infinitely nobler definition of Sir Arthur Pearson, *i.e.*, "a severe handicap." Now, however, we seem to be taken a step further, for we find it suggested that it is even possible for a courageous blind man to "forget about it," as it were! Surely there is something sublime about this idea?

It is conceivable that a sightless person of idle disposition might elect to abandon himself to a state of mental and spiritual "drift"—to passively accept his fate. But, in Sinclair Logan, we reckon with a man who is alive at every point, an artist and a terrific worker; one who, in the exercise of his profession as a musician, has constantly to travel all over the kingdom to fulfil his concert, broadcasting and lecturing engagements; one who is also a church organist, a vocalist, a teacher of music; a man who has, perforce, to read and study incessantly in order to keep himself up to the standard required in the Concert halls of London and the big provincial cities, as well as in the studios of the B.B.C., etc.

If one also recollects that a blind musician must, of necessity, commit everything to memory, and constantly re-scan every detail, one may gain some slight conception of the strain involved.

A Great Example

In contemplating such a case, one is vividly reminded of that great contemporary of Handel, John Stanley (1713-1786), perhaps the greatest blind musical genius this country has yet produced, and whose exultant triumph over blindness was so complete that it is almost impossible to conceive of him as being blind at all. A musician amongst musicians, brilliantly holding his own in the cultured life of the London of his day, his sightlessness simply did not count! So with Sinclair Logan; those who meet him oftenest and know him most intimately, instinctively think of him as the capable man of affairs plus the artist: the *blindness* never obtrudes.

But to know him at all is to realize that he is an extremely sensitive man. From early childhood a curious "kink" for introspection has been to him at once a blessing and a curse. To an interpretative artist abnormal sensitiveness may certainly have infinite compensations, but at what cost few can even pretend to realize.

A conspicuous trait in Logan's character is his love of home, of his family, and his affectionate regard for his friends. He always speaks of his father, and of most of his teachers, with affection and reverence.—"My father was the god of my childhood. I was proud of being his companion and of being with him in our long walks together; indeed, it is absolutely true to say that I was never happy out of his company." He also records his thankfulness that he was "not allowed to develop any abnormal or 'blind' tricks, because" (as he puts it) "both my brothers would 'rag' me unmercifully if ever I did anything queer."

The arrangements for the boy's early education were, unfortunately, so frequently disturbed, over a period of some years, that it seems extraordinary that he should not have been utterly disheartened. This situation was, however, largely due to the removal of the family to Scotland, and, later, to the death of the father, with the consequent breaking up of the home.

With regard to definite musical instruction he came, as a tiny child, under the notice of a remarkable man, John Hudson, the local organist at Heswall, Cheshire, then a lovely old-world village (since modernized out of recognition) on the Estuary of the Dee. This excellent musician was greatly attracted to the music-loving, four-year old boy, and showed a wonderful insight into his nature. He loved to play to him, and gradually taught him to recognize keys and to appreciate good music by presenting it to his juvenile imagination as

a thing of beauty, something to be desired for its own sake. He made no attempt to force the pace, though ever on the look out for any sign of the little pupil's wish to get to the keyboard to "make music" for himself. Mr. Hudson even went so far as to suggest to the parents his willingness to adopt the child and to undertake his early musical training, and he even spoke of learning Braille in order to equip himself better for the task. The parents could not, of course, accept the generous offer, although, even at that early age, it was tacitly understood that music was probably the boy's true vocation.

Two years later, the family having removed to Scotland, the young lad spent a short time at the School for the Blind in Edinburgh, followed by about a year at the Royal Normal College for the Blind, London, at the end of which period he returned to Scotland, and, for the next three years, received private instruction in Glasgow.

Incidentally while at the Royal Normal (at the age of nine) he made himself famous in the school-boy legends of the college by attempting to run away! His confederate was the now well-known entertainer Ronald Gourley. They succeeded, but in trying to find their way back they made the mistake of asking a constable, who himself escorted them

back and roused the whole place, thus spoiling their little scheme. They had not really meant to run away, but, from telling each other tales of adventure, their imaginations had become fired to see if the thing could be done!

Mr. Logan still complains rather bitterly that one of his early teachers forbade him to extemporise, or "play by ear," which he considers had the undesirable effect of not only checking his ideas on the creative side, but also of appreciably retarding his progress as a pianist. He feels, justly enough, that had he been allowed a little more freedom,



SINCLAIR LOGAN, L.R.A.M., A.R.C.M., A.R.C.O.

judiciously tempered by discipline, he would certainly have "discovered the keyboard" for himself much more quickly and intimately. Later, when he went to a really musical school, he was mortified to observe that many boys who he instinctively felt were not as naturally "musical" as himself, were yet able to play the piano much better. Realizing this acutely, he at once set to work to remedy this serious deficiency in his technical equipment.

Education

At the age of twelve, his father having died, he was sent for a year to the College for the Blind at Worcester. At this time, however, the College offered no special facilities suitable to the case of a pupil who would eventually have to earn his livelihood in the musical profession; so, once again, a change had to be made.

Returning to Glasgow, he was fortunate enough to have a course of instruction in pianoforte playing from Philip Halstead, at the same time attending a day school every morning. Speaking of this period Logan says:—"Now my piano-playing began really to progress, and I never can thank that magnificent teacher enough for what he did for me in the year I was with him."

At this juncture a Committee, who administered a special Fund in Glasgow, became interested in the young student, and arrangements were made for his return to the Royal Normal College for a five years' course of musical training at that famous Academy, and there, at the age of fourteen, he was thus enabled to study the Piano under James Friskin, Herbert Fryer and Percy Waller; the Organ under H. F. Watling and H. L. Balfour, and Composition with Stewart Macpherson, eventually taking the diplomas of L.R.A.M. for Composition, and A.R.C.M. for Solo-singing. He also became an Associate of the Royal College of Organists.

Singing is now Mr. Logan's chief subject. His principal studies in this art were under the tutelage of Percival Driver. It may be of interest to note that, for years, he never thought of his voice as worth special cultivation. In the course, however, of his preparation for the Examination of the Royal College of Organists, he had to study Plunket Greene's "Interpretation in Song," and the Norwood

College Authorities sent him to hear the great man lecture. Mr. Logan has thus recorded his impressions:—"He seemed to me to sing not so much because he had a voice, but rather because he so loved poetry and music that he *had* to sing. I too loved poetry and music, and so I was fired with zeal to try what I could do."

Vocalist and Organist

About this time he became anxious (as he puts it) to "get a job" in order to relieve his mother, and, as one chanced to come to hand, he left Norwood to become the baritone vocalist in Lady Pearson's St. Dunstan's Concert Party, a post which he held for three and a half years.

During this engagement he unfortunately became seriously ill, but Lady Pearson was the soul of kindness, and, instead of dismissing him, did everything possible to assist his recovery, thus earning his eternal gratitude.

In 1921, he secured the post of Organist and Choirmaster at St. Ninian's Presbyterian Church, Golders Green, London, N.W. The church is situated in an ideal "teaching" locality, and attended by a cultured congregation who know how to appreciate the musician who directs their "Praise," as the Presbyterians so happily call their worship-music.

Mr. Logan's health has happily become established, so that he is able to attend to his multifarious duties as Organist and Teacher, besides his Lecturing, Concert and Broadcasting engagements, which keep him on the move almost incessantly "from John o' Groat's to Land's End."

Accompanist and Composer

Mr. Logan is a superb accompanist. On one occasion at which he acted as accompanist for Miss Mackerras at the Wigmore Hall, when he also played the piano part in Walthew's Sonata for Viola and Piano, with James Lockyer as Solo Viola, the music critic of the *Daily Express* wrote:—"Mr. Sinclair Logan . . . has so far triumphed over sightlessness that he leaves one unconscious of it. He played with a keen sense of emotional values, and in a fairly long programme his memory was not once at fault."

As a Composer, Mr. Logan has several charming works to his credit. Four of these are published in that Series of representative

works known as "The National Institute Edition of the Works of British Blind Composers." The writer (Editor of this Series) confesses to a special fancy for his exquisite Serenade :—"Sleep, dear heart," which is full of tenderness and delicacy of treatment. Another song (in the same Edition) :—"Early one morning," was included by the Associated Board in their Examination Syllabus Test-pieces ; while his "Venetian Boat-Song," for Piano (same Edition) was early selected by the Æolian Company for a Pianola record. Mr. John Coates also sang an unpublished setting of "How sweet the moonlight sleeps" at one of his recent Recitals in London, the beauty of the setting being specially commented upon by the critics. It is to be regretted that the pressure of his engagements as a performer, etc., do not allow Mr. Logan to devote more time to composition, for he is one who really has "something to say."

A Man of Varied Interests

In 1923 Mr. Logan was married to Miss Edith Bromley-Boorne ; and all his friends cordially agree with him when he declares that event as "the best and most delightful thing which has happened to me." His home life is singularly happy, and so we take our leave of him. A man of varied interests and tastes, he delights as much in literature and the drama as in music. Always cheery, sympathetic, unselfish and keen to appreciate the gifts of others, and what he calls the "blessings" of life, he has surrounded himself by friends irresistibly drawn to one whose personality is so attractive and loveable. Thoroughly engrossed in his art, he has attained success through unremitting work and drastic self-criticism. Young, and with life still opening out before him, may health and strength be long vouchsafed to enable him to enrich the world by the exercise of his gifts, as well as to continue his practical demonstration of how far blindness can be "ignored" by those who thus resolutely decline to surrender a single point in the absolute mastership of their own indomitable souls.

EDWARD WATSON.



ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

TWO blind musicians have received first prizes for organ-playing at the Paris Conservatoire. Each was trained by a blind professor.

CORRESPONDENCE

S.P.G. Braille Study Circles

Sir,

You kindly let me bring to the notice of your readers, year by year, our Braille Study Circles. We look forward to beginning them in September, as usual, and shall be delighted to welcome new members. Our subjects will include Australia, Japan, and two Bible text-books. The Circles consist of five or six members each, with a sighted leader, and last about six months. There are no fees of any kind. I gladly answer, in Braille, all enquiries sent to me.

2, Cheyne Court, Yours, etc.,

London, S.W.3. SYBYL GRAY (Miss),

Value of Wireless

Sir,—The value of the wireless to us who are blind is beyond price ; deprived as we are of the daily papers, we hear every evening through the general news bulletin the chief events of that day. These events may be connected with places in the homeland or overseas. Our eyes are shut to those scenes, but the wireless gives us magic spectacles ; first-class lecturers so well describe them that by using our vivid imagination we can see them with our mental eye. Trained critics give us brief sketches of books just published that may never reach us in Braille. Cookery books are no use to us in print, but if we listen to talks on recipes we can tell our cooks and friends how to make many tasty dishes Lectures are broadcast on nearly every topic under the sun, but perhaps those most useful to us who cannot see are on health, philosophy and music. Music plays a large part in the wireless programmes, and is specially appreciated by us, from merry dance tunes to works of great musicians, and grand organ recitals. This latter instrument reminds us of worship. We who are dependent on others cannot always get to religious services. Here again, the wireless comes to our aid. We can listen to inspiring services to suit every shade of thought. Last, but not least, we who specially benefit by the wireless are able to give our money and our sympathy to the causes whose appeals we hear every Sunday evening as thank offerings to God, the giver of all good gifts:

Yours, etc. L. F.

REPORTS FROM THE INSTITUTIONS

Local Government Act in Hertfordshire County

A SCHEME for the working of the new Local Government Act in Hertfordshire was approved at a meeting in London recently of the Hertfordshire County Council. Full provision, says the *Daily News*, has been made for dealing with Poor Law cases, the treatment of nursing mothers and children, and for the establishment of a midwifery service.

It is proposed later to provide homes for unemployable blind persons.

For the purposes of the Act the county has been divided into seven areas.

Sir E. Barnard, the chairman, said that the object was to reduce the institutions in the county, to close the indifferent ones, and bring the remainder to a high standard of health efficiency.

The Barclay Home and School

THE Annual Meeting of the Barclay Home and School took place last month, and we are pleased to report that the Chairman, Major-General Sir Reginald Buckland, K.C.M.G., C.B., alluded to an eminently successful year. At the same time he emphasized the fact that more goods must be sold. The sales amounted to £1,200, but in spite of this they had not caught up with the supply, and well-wishers of the Institution who are resident in Brighton were asked to help by doing more shopping at the Barclay shop in East Street.

The Annual Report states that there are seventy-five pupils under the age of sixteen in the elementary school. There are twenty residents and four non-resident pupils in the technical school, which gives training in handloom weaving, machine-knitting, basketry and housecraft, and ten pupils who left during the year have taken definite work in various workshops. Twenty ex-pupils are employed in the Brighton Workshop, live in lodgings in the town or their own homes, and go daily to work. Two legacies were received during the year, one of £2,588 and another of £500.

The Committee recorded their great appreciation of the work of the Lady Superintendent, Miss Snowball, and of the Headmistress of the Technical School, Miss Eide. Mr. H. J. Wagg, O.B.E., Honorary Secretary of the

Joint Committee of the Barclay Institutions, who seconded the adoption of the Report and Balance Sheet, recorded the fact that, exactly a hundred years ago, Braille invented his famous system of reading for the blind. He recalled to them the numbers of blind people who had become doctors of law, organists and masseurs, and those who held other responsible positions. A list of these was kept by the National Institute for the Blind, and Mr. Wagg also alluded to the pleasure derived by blind people from the reading of embossed books and magazines published by the Institute.

South Shields Institutions

ACCORDING to the Annual Report of the South Shields Institution for the Blind, the number of blind people on the register is now 178. The workshops have been well employed, for although contracts have not been forthcoming, private work has considerably increased. The Committee point out the difficulty in finding work for the blind, and appeal for the interest and support of the public, who are invited to visit the workshops. The report also refers to the stand at the North-East Coast Exhibition, and the efforts generally to bring the claims of the blind workers before the public.

The general charity account shows that £406 was spent in augmentation of wages of the blind and £258 in grants to necessitous blind, the total expenditure including balance (deficit) for workshop trading account being £1,498. The main items in the income were subscriptions £431, flag day collections £130, garden fete £103. The South Shields Corporation gave a grant of £500, the Ministry £240, and the Northern Counties Association £12 10s., the deficit on the year's working being £77 15s. 3d.

To Superintendents and Head Teachers

THE Henry Stainsby Memorial Fund provides gifts in the form of Braille watches, Braille typewriters, apparatus and embossed books for pupils who have completed their training at recognised Colleges and Schools for the Blind. Forms of application, which must be signed by a Superintendent or Head Teacher, can be obtained from the Secretary-General, National Institute for the Blind, 224-8 Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

ANNUAL SISTERHOOD MEETING

ON June 5th there was a "Grand Rally" of the Sisterhoods of London—those enthusiastic supporters of "Geranium Day"—when, for the first time, the Annual Meeting took place at the Queen's Hall, Langham Place. In previous years these meetings have been held at the National Institute for the Blind, but this was the occasion of a very special celebration. The number "7" always seems to be invested with a unique significance. This is the seventh year of the Sisterhoods' work for the blind, and the chief event at the gathering was the presentation of a handsome silver urn to the Sisterhood which had raised the largest sum towards the Greater London Fund during the year, *viz.*, the Wesleyan Sisterhood Club, Quex Road, Kilburn. The urn was provided by the Directors of the firm of Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., and is known as the "British Weekly" Challenge Trophy. In addition, a set of silver tea-spoons and tongs, also presented by the "British Weekly," was awarded to the individual collector who had raised the largest

amount during the year, the recipient being Mrs. Eades, of the Hackney Central Mission.

Tea was served after the meeting at the Polytechnic by kind permission of the Governors, the overflow of the large attendance being accommodated at the Queen's Hall.

An interesting feature of the event was that the sum required for the hire of the Queen's Hall, and other incidental expenses, had been raised entirely by the sale of postcards bearing verses on the various occupations of the blind, written by Miss E. C. Edwards, Sisterhood Appeal Organiser of the Greater London Fund, and illustrated by Miss Joan Hassall, a daughter of John Hassall, the famous poster artist.

The musical programme consisted of an organ recital by Mr. H. C. Warrilow, F.R.C.O.,

and singing by the G.L.F. Quartet, Miss Isabella Vass, L.R.A.M., Miss Ruth Baugh, Mr. William Turner and Mr. Frank Falkus. The Quartet sang an opening and a closing community song: "Count Your Many Blessings" and "Jerusalem," and Miss Vass and Mr. Turner were heard to great advantage in Shakespearean duets. When Miss Vass was led forward to be introduced to Dame Madge Kendal, who presented the trophies, the famous actress put around her a necklace which she herself had been wearing,

In making the presentations, Dame Madge, in an address which alternated between grave and gay, congratulated the winners and spoke of her deep appreciation of the work carried on for the care and training of the blind.



DAME MADGE KENDAL PRESENTING THE TROPHY

The Chair was taken by Captain Sir Beachcroft Towse V.C., K.C.V.O., C.B.E., who is the Chairman of the National Institute for the Blind and Vice-President of the Fund. In a characteristic speech, he warmly thanked all the women's organisations who had helped on "Geranium Day,"

and expressed his satisfaction at being present at so unique a gathering. Like everyone else, he was delighted that Dame Madge Kendal, such a constant friend of the blind, had so kindly consented to present the silver tea-urn, the generous gift of the Directors of *The British Weekly*, which had always shown much interest in the Blind. He welcomed Dr. Hutton, the Editor, a fellow Scot, who thus showed in a practical way both his own sympathy and that of the great journal which he represented. Sir Beachcroft referred to the rapid progress in facilities for the use and benefit of the blind, and he was happy to announce that much of the English Braille Music Notation, perfected by the National Institute for the Blind had been adopted as the standard notation throughout Europe.

The splendid work done by the women's organisations for the blind of London was of immense value in furthering that ideal which they all had in view—of enabling all the blind to become self-respecting, self-supporting citizens.

The Rev. John A. Hutton, D.D., Editor of the *British Weekly*, in a delightful address, referred to the problem of blindness. How could the blindness of innocent sufferers be compatible with the conception of a loving God? There was no solution on the intellectual plane, and any adequate solution could only be found on moral and spiritual planes. Calamity to one individual might mean service and redemption to another. When you gave bread to a hungry man you not only helped him, but you made "the living bread of character" for yourself; and his distress was your opportunity.

Mr. H. C. Preece, the Secretary of the Fund, in the course of a witty and humorous speech, thanked all those who had contributed to the success of the gathering.

He thanked Sir Beachcroft Towse, V.C., their national hero, chief, and great example, for taking the Chair and congratulated Lady Towse on her re-appearance after a long and trying illness.

He warmly thanked Dame Madge Kendal for her presence and her speech, Dr. and Mrs. Hutton and the Proprietors of the "British Weekly," and he paid a warm tribute to his colleague, Miss Edith Edwards, whose enthusiasm, organising capacity and tireless energy had ensured the success of the meeting. Lastly, he gratefully thanked those present and all the women in various organisations who had so liberally and steadfastly given to the blind through the agency of this Fund. "I know," said Mr. Preece, "that many of you live under clouded skies. But I know that those clouded skies can drop the rain of kindness, and, women of London, the land of blindness is thirsting for that rain."

A deeply interesting account of the year's activities was given by Miss Edith C. Edwards, Sisterhood Appeal Organiser. She said the Sisterhoods of London and Kindred Associations had raised for the Greater London Fund for the Blind over £3,500 during seven years of service, and this year they had broken all previous records, having contributed up-

wards of £900—£628 on "Geranium Day" alone, £179 Box Collections, Concerts, etc., and the rest by the sale of postcards. "Geranium Day" had realised over the whole of London about £7,150. In the Postcard Competition, 80 Sisterhoods had sold considerably over 20,000 postcards.

In conclusion, Miss Edwards said:—

"You have helped to fill this Hall to overflowing; but more than that, our hearts are overflowing with gratitude to you for your sympathetic interest in the work we have so much at heart. The stream of kindness springing in your hearts has broadened into a river of service which will ultimately flow into the ocean of everlasting love."



Museums and the Blind

LAST month we gave an account of a series of experimental demonstrations to blind children at the Natural History Museum, London. Mr. G. Jackson, Superintendent Home Teacher of the Sunderland Institution for the Blind, now writes to record the great pleasure and profit which the blind of Sunderland have derived from similar demonstrations. Some twenty years ago Mr. Charles Deas, M.A., F.R.Hist.S., F.L.A., Director of the Public Museum, Libraries and Art Galleries, Sunderland, arranged a number of lectures illustrated by exhibits which the blind were permitted to handle freely with the most gratifying results. Since that date Mr. Deas has further permitted the blind to handle specimens under skilled supervision, and recently arranged for a replica of the Portland Vase to be shown to them, and its romantic story described.

In 1924 the blind Missioner and Lecturer to the Sunderland and County Durham Incorporated Royal Institute for the Blind received the permission of his Committee to start weekly classes for the blind at which talks are given on historical, literary and scientific subjects to an average of 175 persons weekly. He has frequently expressed his indebtedness to the National Institute for the Blind for the invaluable help derived from the scientific books produced by them. He has also received great assistance from the literary and historical books published. By means of these weekly talks he passes on much interesting information to blind persons who are not able to read Braille type.

THE MUSICAL OPPORTUNITIES OF THE BLIND IN FRANCE

By P. T. MAYHEW



It is not my present intention to give an account of the business which took me to France at the end of April, but to record a few of my impressions of the work for the blind in that country. I had been appointed as one of the English delegates to attend a very important International Conference on the Unification of the Braille Music Notation Symbols, which was indeed an honour I greatly appreciated. Let it, then, suffice that the deliberations, which lasted from April 22 to 29, were crowned with success—the open-mindedness of all making it possible, in spite of the intricate nature of the work.

Sight-Seeing Blind Institutions

Reaching Paris a few days before the Conference started, we had a little time for sight-seeing. With the American delegate we took the opportunity to visit two of the most important institutions for the blind in France, the Institution Nationale des Jeunes Aveugles—the oldest Blind School in the world—and the Association Valentin Haüy, a large library with 100,000 volumes of literature and a great quantity of music, a small Braille printing department, and workshops for basketry and woodwork. At both these places we were most warmly received, and the information we obtained was a revelation to us all. The eagerness on the part of the authorities to answer our questions, and the thoroughness with which they conducted us over the establishments, made our visit both interesting and instructive. One fact was very evident at both Institutions. The French realise that it is possible for the blind to undertake the management as well as to perform the actual work. In all departments the blind are in charge, with only the minimum of sighted assistance.

In the library at the Association Valentin Haüy, I was especially interested to examine the system of card indexing in Braille, which had a double check for the purpose of despatching and returning books.

At the Institution Nationale, which is a school of music similar to the Royal Normal

College, all the professors are blind. Their success speaks for itself from the results that come, for on inquiry we learned that there are at least 1,000 blind organists throughout France. When one remembers that, for the most part, the churches are Roman Catholic, then one can easily realise that their organists require a thorough musical training to prepare them for their posts. They are not responsible, as in England, for the choir.

Not only are the French organists *trained* for their profession. In obtaining appointments for them, France gives a lead which it would be well for other countries to follow.

Monsieur Mahout

M. Mahout, a brilliant blind organist and a former student of the Institution, is known and sought after throughout the whole country. He is an independent gentleman, devoted to his cause. Whenever and wherever an organ post is vacant, he makes it his business to communicate with the church, and offers to give a recital, which is readily accepted. After the performance, when congratulations are being showered upon him, he asks those responsible for the appointment if they will accept his nominee now that they know what a blind man can do. They find it very hard to refuse, and another blind organist is added to his list. These appointments are principally in the small towns, where the blind musician, as organist of the parish church, generally finds himself the recognised music teacher of the district.

Monsieur Pierre Villey

We first heard of M. Mahout's splendid work from M. Pierre Villey, a distinguished blind professor of the Paris University and Secretary-General of the Association Valentin Haüy. He was attending a Council meeting at the Association, and hearing of our arrival, he came out and remained with us for over an hour. He is the greatest authority on the blind in France, and has written several important books on the subject. His prominent position brings him into touch with Government men, and we were very surprised by a remark he passed when talking with us on the subject of State aid for the blind. He said that only that day he had pointed out to a Minister of the

Government, with a view of obtaining similar concessions in France, the strides which had been made in this direction in England during the last few years. Then, quite spontaneously, he explained that his knowledge had been obtained from the books of our greatest English authority, Mr. Ben Purse. This mark of recognition of one of our countrymen delighted us, for it was so unexpected.

Wider Field for Music

Another point of interest which should be stressed and seriously considered in England we also gathered from M. Villey before we actually visited the Institution Nationale. There, music covers a far wider field than we had expected. Not only is instruction given in organ and piano-playing, but the different orchestral instruments are taught, providing the Institution with a very fine orchestra. Three times a week they meet for rehearsals, and take part in choral Mass celebration, without, of course, the religious ceremony. They do not in any way claim that their students can enter other orchestras as a profession; but they do prove, with much success, that the blind can teach their respective orchestral instruments, and so augment their income. Instruction in pianoforte tuning is also given, adding yet another "string to their bow."

The concert hall seats about 600, and has a

very fine organ. At the back of the hall is a small chapel which can be added to the hall by sliding back the panelled partition and dropping a curtain before the altar.

There are in the Institution Nationale about 210 pupils—boys and girls—from the age of seven to twenty-one. The girls, on leaving, teach principally in convents, and their knowledge of the organ often enables them to act as organist in the convent chapel. They do not enter as nuns, so are allowed to go out and teach the violin or piano to the children of the district.

The Institution is practically supported by the State, but appeals are made to the public, who assist by donations and voluntary help in transcribing both literature and music.

Interchange of Ideas

Our visits, we felt, had been well worth while, for the exchange of ideas had been mutually appreciated. In this connection I would conclude with a suggestion that might be helpful in solving many of the difficulties which exist in the world of the blind. From time to time representatives of this country should be appointed by some responsible organisation to visit other countries for the specific purpose of investigation and for the interchange of ideas. This would, I am sure, prove most profitable to the cause of the blind in all lands.



INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON BRAILLE MUSIC NOTATION, PARIS 22/29 April, 1929

Names of Delegates (L to R):—Herr Czychy, Herr Reuss (Germany) Signor Fornasa (Italy); Mr. Mayhew, Mr. Watson (England); Mr. Rodenberg (U.S.A.); Miss Regnier, M. Raverat, M. Dupas (American Braille Press); M. Blasy, M. Clavers (Paris)

COLLEGE OF TEACHERS OF THE BLIND

RESULTS OF EXAMINATIONS.

SCHOOL TEACHERS' EXAMINATION,

1929.



THE Twenty-first Examination for the Certificate of the College was held on the 14th and 15th May at the School for the Blind, Swiss Cottage, London, N.W.3.

The Examiners were Mr. W. M. Stone (Chairman), Miss M. M. R. Garaway, Miss E. M. Jones, Mr. E. Evans, Mr. A. R. Bannister, Dr. J. M. Ritchie, Miss J. I. Falconer (Secretary).

Fifteen candidates entered—nine women and six men, of whom two were blind and two partially blind. Two were re-entrants from last year.

Eleven candidates have gained the certificate. Seven candidates were of special merit, and gained 80 per cent. of the marks.

The board of examiners report as follows :

THEORETICAL BRAILLE

Honours	Passes	Failures
7	4	3

The paper was, as usual, very well done.

PRACTICAL BRAILLE

Honours	Passes	Failures
10	3	1

The reading was fluent and intelligent—candidates were well prepared. The dictation of ten candidates was well done. Those who obtained low marks did so largely because they did not apply their knowledge of the rules for the use of contractions and by the omission of many contractions and punctuation signs.

ARITHMETIC

Honours	Passes	Failures
9	4	1

These results speak for themselves. The Taylor frame was well manipulated.

THEORY OF EDUCATION

Honours	Passes	Failures
0	12	1

The average was fairly good, but no paper was of outstanding merit. The result was rather disappointing. One paper was two marks below honours.

PRACTICE OF TEACHING

Honours	Passes	Failures
2	10	1

The subjects chosen for the lessons were interesting, but the presentation was rather dull. The average mark gained was 69 per cent.

INFANT HANDWORK

Honours	Passes	Failures
1	0	0

The candidate showed an intelligent knowledge of the educational value of graded handwork. The specimens of work were excellent.

PHYSICAL TRAINING

Honours	Passes	Failures
2	2	1

This year we are glad to report a noticeable improvement.

BRAILLE MUSIC

Honours	Pass
1	1

TYPEWRITING

Honours	Pass
2	1

Well-arranged papers showing a good knowledge of the work.

CENTRE CANE WORK

Pass	Failure
1	1

CHAIR CANING

Honours	Passes	Failures
2	3	1

Schemes well drawn out. The work is improving in this Section.

HAND KNITTING

Honours	Pass	Failure
3	1	0

The schemes in this Section were well done. The graded character of the specimens was well suited to the capabilities of blind children and was attractive to children.

The Arthur Pearson Prize was awarded to Mr. C. E. Spurgeon, of the Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind ; Mrs. C. M. Bayliss, of the East Anglian School for the Blind, Gorleston-on-Sea, was *proxime accessit*. The following is a list of the successful candidates ; the number of the subjects in which honours were obtained is indicated after each name.

LIST OF SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES

Ashton, Miss G. (5)
 Bayliss, Mrs. C. M. (5)
 Bell, Mr. W. (4)
 Best, Mr. B. (3)
 Edmondson, Miss J. (3)
 Houghton, Mr. J. (3)
 Howard, Mr. A. (2)
 Machattie, Miss F. J. (1)
 Spurgeon, Mr. C. E. (5)
 Ward, Miss D. (3)
 Williams, Miss M. (5)

HOME TEACHERS' EXAMINATION,
1929.

The Seventh Examination for the Home Teachers' Certificate was held simultaneously at the School for the Blind, Swiss Cottage, London, N.W.3, and the Institution for the Blind, Roundhay Road, Leeds, on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 30th April, 1st and 2nd May, 1929.

The examiners were Mr. W. M. Stone (Chairman), Miss J. I. Falconer, Miss M. M. R. Garaway, Miss E. M. Jones, Mr. A. R. Banister, Mr. E. Evans, Dr. J. M. Ritchie, Mr. A. Siddall, Mr. S. E. Stevens (Secretary), Mr. W. H. Tate. The following acted as co-opted examiners and invigilators:—Miss Radford, Miss Fearnley, Mrs. Sylvester, Mrs. Dalby, Miss Witherby, Mrs. Wood, Mrs. Jackson, Mr. Symes, Mr. Osborn, Mr. Gadsby.

Ninety-one candidates had entered for the examination of whom 86 presented themselves, and 33 of these were re-entrants.

Forty-seven certificates have been granted, and 18 of these are in respect of re-entrants. Of the successful candidates 2 were blind, 9 partially blind and 36 sighted. The following is the report of the Board of Examiners:

BRAILLE

Honours	Passes	Failures
21	34	20

The Braille Dictation was of a slightly higher standard than that of last year, but there is still great room for improvement. Many of the candidates showed a very limited knowledge of the rules of Grade II, and the slowness with which the majority of the candidates took down the test must be emphasized.

With the exception of a few cases, the word "fluent" could not be applied to the Braille Reading, and in most cases it could hardly merit the term "with intelligence" as set out in the syllabus. Many of the candidates were nervous, whilst others showed evidence of insufficient preparation.

MOON

Honours	Passes	Failures
17	30	17

Here again there was a lack of fluency, but unmistakable signs that candidates did not treat the subject as lightly as in former years. The Theory was distinctly better.

PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE (Practical).

Honours	Passes	Failures
12	43	8

A few of the candidates had had no actual experience in the teaching of simple handicrafts and their efforts were often aimless, but on the whole the candidates showed aptitude and with experience should develop into useful teachers. The Manual Alphabet was fairly well done.

PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE (Theoretical).

Honours	Passes	Failures
9	43	14

The number of passes shows that the bulk of the candidates did very creditably. They had evidently studied the Handbook carefully and displayed an intimate knowledge of Home Teachers' Services. In regard to case work, many showed sound common sense in dealing with the problems presented to them, and gave evidence of "speaking from experience." In other cases it was evident that they had had no previous experience, being slow to grasp the point and requiring quite a number of questions before the necessary facts could be elicited.

CHAIR CANING

Honours	Passes	Failures
11	25	14

The practical work was well done on the whole. The written papers were weak, many of the answers revealing guess work especially in the prices and quantities of cane.

RUSH SEATING

Honours	Passes	Failures
11	24	2

Many of the specimens were excellent, and this subject was very well done.

HAND KNITTING

Honours	Passes	Failures
14	15	7

The work was not up to last year's standard.

PULP CANE WORK

Honours	Passes	Failures
7	10	6

Some of the work showed evidence of special training, and the specimens were better than those of former years.

NETTING

Honours	Passes	Failures
0	1	1

STRAW BAGS AND RAFFIA

Honours	Passes	Failures
5	9	4

STRING BAGS AND RAFFIA

Honours	Passes	Failures
1	3	5

Here again there is evidence of special training in Straw bags and Raffia, but the String bag work was decidedly poor.

RUG MAKING

Honours	Passes	Failures
13	35	5

The test was more difficult this year and the candidates have certainly done well.

BRILLE MUSIC

Honours	Passes	Failures
2	0	0

TYPEWRITING

Honours	Passes	Failures
3	5	2

MACHINE KNITTING

Honours	Passes	Failures
1	1	1

The Arthur Pearson Prize was awarded to Miss I. Greenhalgh of the Manchester and Salford Blind Aid Society; Miss M. H. Drury of the Surrey County Council was *proxime accessit*.

The following is a list of successful candidates; the number of subjects in which honours were obtained is indicated after each name:—

LIST OF SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES

Ahlstedt, Miss P.	Morris, Miss M. E. (2)
Allen, Miss E. M. (4)	Murray, Miss E. M. F.
Arnold, Miss A. M. (3)	Pole, Miss W. G. (3)
Boyd, Miss M. R. (4)	Poole, Miss E. G. (4)
Bull, Miss L. (4)	Price, Miss M. E. H. (1)
Butler, Mr. R. H.	Rudge, Miss E. (4)
Clement, Miss G. A. (3)	Russell, Miss M. D. (5)
Crocker, Mrs. E. J. (1)	Salmon, Miss E. M.
Dale, Miss A. E. (5)	Smith, Miss E. (2)
Davies, Miss B. M.	Spire, Miss E. A. (2)
Drury, Miss M. H. (6)	Sydney, Miss W.
Emms, Mr. W. G. (1)	Tennent-Smith, Miss J. M. (1)
Fletcher, Miss M. P. (4)	Treby-Harvey, Miss H. E. (2)
Forrester, Miss M. A. (1)	Walton, Miss L. E. R. (1)
Gasking, Miss G. S. (2)	Watkins, Mr. J. E.
Gladstone, Miss B. (2)	Watson, Miss C. R.
Greenhalgh, Miss I. (6)	Watson, Mr. H. L. (1)
Hendry, Miss F. W. (3)	Webb, Miss M. H. (2)
Hodgson, Miss L. (5)	Webster, Miss M. C. (3)
Knight, Miss B. (4)	White, Miss M. H. P. (2)
Lewis, Mrs. M. A. (2)	Williams, Miss A. (3)
Maris, Miss R. M. (4)	Witherford, Miss E. (2)
Martin, Miss E. E. (2)	Wragg, Miss G. M. (2)
Mitchell, Miss M. (5)	

GREATER LONDON FUND FOR THE BLIND

A NUMBER of engagements crept into the month of May despite the Election, which threatened to leave the calendar a blank. During the first week Mr. Preece spoke at two Masonic Lodges and paid his annual visit to St. Luke's, Kilburn. On the 11th, Miss Corri—who worked so hard with the North Camberwell Conservative Association on "Geranium Day"—arranged an entertainment by "The Querettes" Concert Party. During the interval Dr. Douglas Cook, the Conservative candidate, and the Rev. E. W. J. Perry appealed to the audience to support the Fund, particularly by joining the Camberwell "Helpers of the Blind," a new group of which was to be formed in Nunhead under the captainship of Miss Corri.

Fulham "H.O.B." invited Miss Vass to sing at the Congregational Church Women's Meeting, in which the Chairman of the Borough Ladies' Flag Day Committee is particularly interested, and on the 23rd the New Malden Circle was launched in an original manner. The occasion was a Tennis Tournament. During the tea interval Mr. Preece told both players and spectators of the good work Mrs. Norrington and Mrs. Spiers were doing for the blind, and asked that many equally true "Helpers of the Blind" would join them that afternoon. In the evening Mr. Preece was again the speaker at Croydon, when Mrs. Wadsworth and "The Keekites" presented "A Midsummer Night's Dream"—a fine performance which drew a good audience, many of whom were secured by Mrs. Newman's energetic support.

Also on the same day Madame Elsie Tunbridge held a useful Rummage Sale.

At Whitsuntide the G.L.F. River Concert Party, mistrusting the weather afloat, took a trial trip on shore in Richmond.

THE Annual Flag Day in aid of "Sunshine" Homes for Blind Babies will be held South of the River, on Saturday, October 5th, North of the River, on Saturday, October 12th.

Anyone willing to assist should apply to Mrs. Claremont, M.B.E., "Sunshine" Homes for Blind Babies, National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, W.1.

REVIEWS

A New French Magazine.

WE have received a copy of a new French monthly magazine called "Poesia," published in contracted Braille. Its aim is to bring blind readers into touch with ancient and modern poetry, and its columns are open to all who are attracted or inspired by the poetic muse.

The April number, for example, contains a note on Rodenbach, with extracts from two of his poems; a sonnet called "Avril," by Tobie; another poem called "Avril," by Chantre; "Symphonie," a short poem by Caudmont, and a short article called "Chronique du Mouvement Poétique."

The rate of subscription is ten francs in France and fifteen francs abroad. All correspondence should be addressed to 73, Boulevard de Grenelle, Paris 15.

Appliances and Apparatus**A Braille Compass**

A BRAILLE Compass is now available for the blind. It is supplied by the National Institute for the Blind at the price of 10s. 6d. The following instructions for use are provided in Braille: After removing lid, hold the compass firmly in left hand, forefinger beside lubber point (fixed point), thumb over lifting lever. Keep lubber point straight ahead, compass as level and steady as possible, and allow half a minute for card to settle. Then firmly depress lever with left thumb, press tightly while finger of right hand is brought across lubber point on to card and the direction is read off.

PERSONALIA.

WE offer our sincere congratulations to "E. K." (Mr. Ernest Kessell) on becoming a Companion of the Order of the British Empire. Two months ago we took great pleasure in telling our readers of his work in connection with the Press, St. Dunstan's and Pearson's Fresh Air Fund, and we are delighted to hear that this work has now received its well-merited recognition.

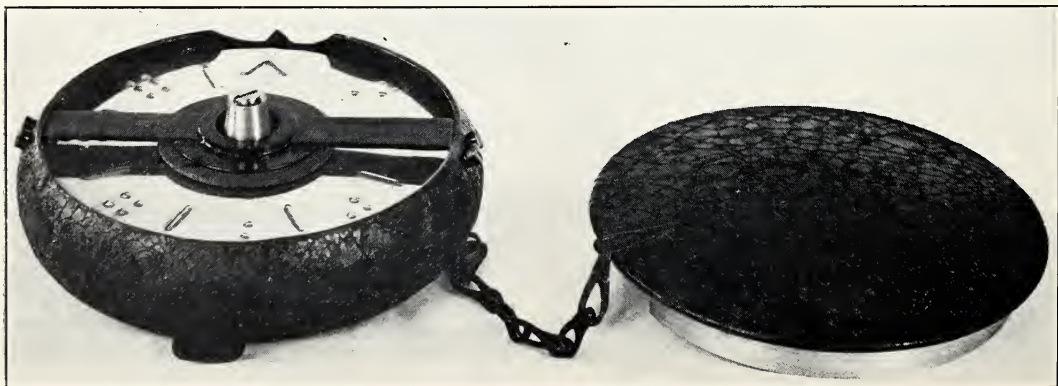
WE are very sorry that Captain Ian Fraser, C.B.E., Chairman of St. Dunstan's, was not returned as Member of Parliament in the last Election. It is, however, very satisfactory to know from journals of every country and every shade of political opinion, that his absence will be greatly regretted in Parliament. Evidently his personality and abilities have left a deep impression on all, and we sincerely hope that Captain Fraser is merely "resting" before a fresh entry into the political arena.

To replace pivot if or when it has got too blunt to give a good reading, remove screw from centre of underside of compass, take out old pivot and insert new one, and then replace screw.

These pivots are "Columbia Loud Tone Needles"—a standard article procurable everywhere.

Braille Postcard Frames

THE National Institute for the Blind is offering for sale a limited quantity of Braille postcard frames in the form of a pocket book at the greatly reduced price of 2s. 6d. each, plus postage. Orders should be addressed to 224, Great Portland Street, W.1.



The BEACON

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INTERESTS OF THE BLIND

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INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS AT VIENNA

July 15th-18th, 1929.



TWENTY-THREE nations were represented by some 150 delegates at a Congress which was held in the beautiful rooms of the Chamber of Commerce in Vienna.

The object of the meeting was to prepare a scheme, draw up an agenda and elect officers for an International Conference to deal with questions relating to the prevention of blindness, and the education, employment and general welfare of the blind in all parts of the civilised world.

The principal countries represented were as follows: America (United States), Argentine, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czecho-Slovakia, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Great Britain, Holland, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Roumania, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland.

There were seven representatives from Great Britain: Mr. Godfrey F. Mowatt and Mr. H. J. Wagg from the National Institute for the Blind; Miss M. Garaway and the Rev. E. H. Griffiths from the College of Teachers; Miss Merivale from the Union of Associations for the Blind; Mr. A. Henderson, from the National League of the Blind, and Mr. W. R. Halliday from the Scottish National Federation of Institutions and Societies for the Blind (Mr. Mowatt also represented the National Union of the Professional and Industrial Blind of Great Britain and Ireland). The Chairman of the Congress

was Syndikus Dr. C. Strehl, Principal of the Blind Institution at Harburg, Lahn, Germany, who was responsible for summoning the meeting in collaboration with the leaders of the blind world in Europe and America.

The delegates met on Sunday at 10 a.m., and were welcomed by representatives of the Government of Austria and of the municipality of Vienna. The Chairman, after welcoming the delegation and giving a brief outline of the matters to be dealt with and the general method of debate to be adopted, called upon several of the leading delegates to address the meeting. The general debate lasted till 2.0 p.m.

On Monday and Tuesday the Congress sat from 8.30 a.m. till 2.0 p.m., a general debate taking place on all matters on the agenda. The important decisions were arrived at on Wednesday, when the Congress sat till 7.0 p.m.

Proceedings on this day commenced by the Chairman calling on Mr. C. H. Raverat (Secretary-General of the American Braille Press) to read two resolutions moved by Mr. Mowatt and Mr. Irwin respectively.

Congress and the League of Nations.

Mr. Raverat.—We have received a motion from Mr. Mowatt on behalf of Great Britain. Mr. Mowatt has been authorised to move that this pre-Congress approach the League of Nations with the proposal that the next Congress be held under the auspices of the League.

Mr. Mowatt.—I have been asked to move this resolution from Great Britain, because our Government would very much have liked to have had its representatives here to help forward the pre-Congress and the Congress to follow, and to support this great work for the blind. I am on the Government Committee of my own country, the committee that advises the government on all matters for the blind and the best methods of expending money on the cause of the blind. The English Government could not send representatives to this Congress because it was not held under the auspices of a European or any other country. If a Congress is held under the auspices of a government or a country, the governments can send their representatives and give their support. Or, if it is held under the auspices of the League of Nations, the governments can all send representatives and support. I feel it is vital to this movement that the various governments should take part as well as the institutions and voluntary societies. In England, owing to government support and help, the whole condition of the blind has been altered and bettered. Why not let us bring this good influence into international conferences? If we can approach the League of Nations and ask it to support the Congress when it is held, then all governments may send representatives in addition to voluntary workers from each country. At the same time, if held under the League of Nations, the Congress would have its prestige behind it, and our work for the blind throughout the world must go forward and cannot die.

Dr. Strehl (Chairman).—I thank the English delegation for its proposal. I am fully convinced that it will find the warmest approval of us all. I hope you will all accept it. (*Warm and loud applause.*)

Proposed American Conference.

Mr. Raverat.—Mr. Irwin moves that this pre-Congress approve the holding of an International Congress, to be convoked by President Hoover of the United States, and held in New York in 1931, in which all the nations of the world will be invited to participate by sending experts on the various questions concerning the welfare of the blind.

Mr. Irwin.—For several years we in America have wished to hold a world conference of experts on work for the blind, with representatives in each country of various activities for the blind. We are not thinking of a large congress such as you are proposing to hold, but a small conference in which there will be only a few experts and leaders from each country.

It is proposed that at such a conference there will be an opportunity for a day or two of discussion followed by a tour of inspection of the leading agencies for the blind in the United States and by a day or two more of careful deliberation concerning what has been observed, as well as



DELEGATES AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, VIENNA.

matters of common interest throughout the world. It is hoped that by holding such a conference of the best minds in work for the blind throughout the world we will be enabled to work out better means of co-operation and co-ordination of our activities. It is proposed to call this conference prior to your general Congress. Reports can then be made at the general Congress of the work done at the specialist conference. I believe it will be of assistance in making your big Congress more successful. It is proposed to ask President Hoover of the United States to call this conference, though it will be held under the direction of an international committee consisting of representatives from

America and several European countries. It has been objected that it might be difficult for these experts to get to the United States because of the high cost of travel and great distance. I am in a position to say that the international committee which will have charge of this conference will have placed at its disposal a limited amount of money which can be used in assisting to make the conference a thoroughly representative one. Those interested in this conference of experts are very desirous of having this pre-Congress endorse this proposition. I hope, therefore, that you will consider it favourably.

Mr. Altmann and Mr. Wagg spoke in favour of Mr. Irwin's proposal.

Monument to Louis Braille.

Mr. Raverat.—When I heard the speeches yesterday, made by Dr. Landberg and Dr. Steinberg, it reminded me of a visit a few months ago to Louis Braille's birthplace, near Paris. Delegates from various nations brought a bronze wreath to his statue. This statue is a very modest one, and is not worthy of so great a man, and of the blind who owe so much to him. I propose that funds be raised from all over the world in order to improve the monument, or that a new monument be erected with these funds. We have support from every country in the world, and

if anybody is interested in this, he may address me, care of Dr. Strehl, at Marburg.

An Independent Union.

Mr. Visschere (Belgium) moved that co-operation and collaboration with the League of Nations and the International Labour Office was at present not advisable. The organizations for the blind all over the world must be strong enough themselves to found an independent international union of the blind.

Committees Appointed.

The Congress decided to establish 20 committees which are named in the accompanying table, together with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, who were appointed with power to select their own Committee of Experts from the 23 nations represented.

An Executive Committee was also appointed consisting of Director Altmann (Austria), Director Grasemann (Germany), Dr. Nicolodi (Italy), Mr. Mowatt (Great Britain), Mr. Raverat (U.S.A.), Prof. Villey (France), Dr. Strehl (Germany), with power in each case to appoint a deputy and with powers to make all arrangements for the Main Conference and to decide the date and place of the Conference, and with power to approach the League of Nations for permission for the Conference to be held under its auspices.

Committees Nominated at the Vienna Pre-Congress :

Name of Committee

1. Hygiene.
2. Education.
3. Teaching.
4. Instruction of the Partially Blind.
5. Libraries and Catalogues.
6. Music Notation.
7. Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Geography.
8. Latin, Hebrew, Greek and Phonetics
9. Printing and Apparatus for Printing.
10. Museums for the Blind.
11. General Legislation.
12. Welfare.
13. Public Provision and Pensions.
14. Guide Dogs.
15. Public Provision of Work, Legislation, etc.
16. Opening up New Occupations, Exchange of Experiences Mental Work, etc.
17. Investigation ; Manual Work.
18. Statistics.
19. Affairs of the Female Blind.
20. International Co-operation. (Purpose: to study the organization of the blind throughout the world).

Chairman

- Dr. Moldowa (Roumania).
 Dir. Grasemann (Germany).
 Dir. Altmann (Austria).
 Mr. Wanecek (Austria).
 Mr. Stone (Gt. Britain).
 Mr. Raverat (America).

 M. Henri (France).
 Mr. Güterbock (Germany).
 Mr. Andrews (Gt. Britain).
 Mr. Melhuber (Austria).
 Mr. Henderson (Gt. Britain).
 Dr. Peyer (Germany).
 Mr. Jakobs (Holland).
 Mrs. Eustis (Switzerland).

 Dr. Nicolodi (Italy).

 Prof. Villey (France).
 Dir. Niepel (Germany).
 Mr. Hübner (Germany).
 Miss Schaffer (Switzerland).

 Mr. Pestelli (Italy).

Vice-Chairman

- Dr. G. Kaufman (Germany).
 Dr. Belzer (Holland).
 Dir. Halarevici (Roumania).
 Mr. Meyer (America).
 Mr. Dreyer (Germany).
 Mr. Blazy (France).

 Mr. Thulin (Sweden).
 Mr. Swift (Canada).
 Mr. Reuss (Germany).
 M. Henri (France).
 Dr. Foth (Germany).
 Mr. Fiten (Belgium).
 Mr. Purse (Gt. Britain).
 Dr. Gäbler-Kibbe (Germany).

 Mr. Wagner (Poland).

 Mr. Latimer (U.S.A.).
 Mr. Pyke (Gt. Britain).
 Mr. Best (U.S.A.).
 Miss Seif (Austria).

 Mr. Fiten (Belgium).

Dr. Strehl was appointed Chairman, with headquarters at Marburg. On the retirement of any Chairman or Vice-Chairman of any committee the Executive were authorized to re-appoint.

The official languages of the Congress were English, French, German, Italian and Esperanto and all the speeches, after delivery, were repeated by official interpreters.

A Lasting Good Fellowship.

Much good work was accomplished between meetings in inspecting new apparatus that had been brought from different countries, discussing improved methods and generally exchanging information. The most valuable result of the meeting at Vienna was that the experts from all countries were brought together in the common cause and learnt to understand one another's views. We feel sure that a lasting good fellowship has been established.

Entertainment of Delegates.

Dr. Altmann, Principal of the Jewish School for the Blind in Vienna, was responsible for all the local arrangements and the delegates owe a great debt of gratitude to him for all that he did to make the Congress such a success and for the delightful welcome the delegates received. On Monday he invited the delegates to dinner and provided a most enjoyable musical programme, the part singing being rendered by blind artists from his Institution supported by one of the best Viennese Orchestras.

On Tuesday the Lord Mayor invited the delegates to a civic reception and banquet at the magnificent Town Hall, followed by music and singing by some of the leading Viennese performers.

On Wednesday evening the final goodwill was cemented by the delegates dining together at Schönbrunn.

During the stay visits were paid to the Institution for the Blind and to the wonderful museum containing pictures of most of the famous blind men and women mentioned in history, and specimens of apparatus, type and books used by the blind from the earliest recorded times, dating back some 200 years. Two cinema films of the work being done by the blind in Germany were also shown to the delegates.

PERSONALIA

Presentation to Mr. J. H. Lee.

MR. J. H. LEE, late Supervisor of Branches, National Institute for the Blind, was presented last month by his colleagues at Headquarters with a handsome solid silver cigarette case, with his initials and the monogram of the Institute (N.I.B.) inscribed in gold. Accompanying this was a framed message of hearty goodwill and friendship—a pleasing memento of Mr. Lee's very many friends at the Institute.

In addition, there was a representative gathering of Branch officials at the Great Northern Hotel, Leeds, on Thursday evening, the 18th July, to entertain Mr. Lee to dinner and to present him with a beautiful Electro Standard Lamp in dark oak with an orange shade. It bore a brass plate with the following inscription: "Presented to Mr. J. H. Lee by the Provincial Branch officials of the National Institute for the Blind on his retirement from the service, July, 1929."

Blind Man's Walk.

HERR WILLY HAGER, a German world-war veteran, who was blinded on the Russian front in 1918, according to the *Chicago Tribune*, recently arrived in Vienna to consult an eye specialist, after walking the entire distance from Berlin. The blind man was led by a German police dog named Remo Von Hohenloe, who is so well trained that he never leaves the highways, and always stops at crossings and barks when strangers come along, to tell Herr Hager that the time is opportune to ask for information.

Herr Hager's walk was not undertaken in a spirit of adventure, but was due to lack of funds. Professor Eiselsberg operated on him in 1922, when he recovered his eyesight, but he lost it again when he fell off a bicycle.

Museums for the Blind.

IN view of our recent notes on the above subject it is of interest to learn that Mr. Herbert W. Ricketts has, according to the *Yorkshire Evening Post*, received official notice of his appointment as Curator of the Leeds Museum. At Sunderland he took a prominent part in the work mentioned last month of showing blind people museum exhibits, and he hopes to introduce a similar scheme in Leeds for the benefit of the blind. We hope he will be well supported in this excellent educational work, which we should like to see extended throughout the country.

PERSONALITIES

IN THE WORLD OF THE BLIND

Mr. THOMAS WILLIAM HOLMES

The Blind Man's Artist



It is scarcely likely that the way-farer, entering the little Thames-side village of Shepperton from the direction of Staines, will notice the rusty roof of a little building standing in an orchard behind a cluster of wayside villas at the entrance to the village. Should it, for a moment, hold the attention of a roving eye, the fact that the roof is partly glazed may suggest that the building

is a small photographer's studio.

It is, indeed, a studio, and almost certainly the only one of its kind in our islands, for the artist there quietly at work day after day is producing designs which will never be seen by those for whom they are drawn. It is the studio of Mr. T. W. Holmes, the illustrator of blind books, who for many years has

been the producer of all the plates of maps, diagrams and illustrations which appear in the Braille publications of the National Institute for the Blind.

Thomas William Holmes was born in 1872 at Newcastle-upon-Tyne. When he was about seven years of age, the family moved to Leeds, and here, at St. Mark's School, Woodhouse, he received most of his education.

With his fifteenth year came the necessity of choosing an occupation, a matter of long and anxious family discussion. The boy had always shown a marked aptitude for drawing and painting, and had received every encouragement and help from parents and teachers. But to his father, a commercial traveller, and to the lad himself, the world of art was entirely unknown, and the possibility of finding the road leading to that pleasant land, and of

making a living within its boundaries, seemed hopeless. The atmosphere of a shop was more familiar, and work within shop walls seemed safer; and so, one bright, fresh, autumn morning in 1887, young Holmes found himself tightly swathed in a spotless white apron, standing behind a chemist's counter in one of the busy central streets of Leeds.

But it was soon seen that the youth was not likely to develop much skill with pill and pestle, and the plan to make a living as a chemist and druggist was abandoned.

Further months of consideration followed. At last it was decided to let the boy's natural gifts have free play, and he was entered as a full-time student at the Leeds School of Art, which at that time occupied quarters in the Mechanics' Institute in Cook-ridge Street.

Here he found himself in his right

element, and began to make rapid progress. He had not been there a year before he had won a Silver Medal for Design in the National Competition which is held annually by the Art Department at South Kensington, and this was followed by a Bronze Medal the next year. He quickly qualified for his Art Class Teachers' Certificate, and at the age of 17 he had gained a position on the staff of the School as teacher of Elementary and Advanced Perspective.

The prospect of going through life as an art master, however, did not appeal to him; his desire was always to be engaged on original creative work, and the times were propitious.

These were the years that saw the birth of the great cheap illustrated press we see round us to-day, brought into being by the discovery of rapid photographic methods of



THE BLIND MAN'S ARTIST.

reproduction which superseded the old laborious and expensive wood engraving. This brought with it a great demand for artists who could make line drawings in pen and ink. New illustrated papers were appearing every week, and it was every student's ambition to become a "black and white" artist. Had not Phil May, himself a son of Leeds, already startled the world of art, and shown some of the wonderful possibilities of the new medium?

It was not long before young Holmes was a regular contributor to the London comic papers, and he was soon able to give up teaching and devote himself entirely to illustration.

He came up to London in 1894, and here he has been since as a story illustrator. His work has appeared at one time or another in nearly every boy's paper that is published to-day, and he contributed to the first numbers of many of them.

A New World Hitherto Unknown.

It was during the War that he first came in touch with the world of the blind. The editor of *Progress* wanted a war map, and applied to a well-known studio in Fleet Street, where Holmes happened to be working at the time. The job was given to him, and he will tell you that at that moment he realised, as in a flash, the existence of a new world for the illustrator, hitherto unknown and undreamt of, the world of books for the blind; and he determined to devote the remainder of his life to the designing of illustrations for the blind. His first task was to cultivate his own sense of touch, and to this end he set to work to learn to read Braille as a blind man does—with his fingers. This practice he has always kept up, and has developed to the point where he is able to read with pleasure; he makes it a rule always to have a Braille book on the way, and has read many novels, notably Kipling's "Captain Courageous" and Weyman's "House of the Wolf," only by touch. Whenever possible he likes to test the proofs of his maps and diagrams himself, with his eyes shut, so that he may know how every surface, line and dot feels to those for whom they are designed.

Acquiring Technical Knowledge.

He also turned his attention to the process by which maps and diagrams at that time were being embossed on the zinc plates from which they are printed, and saw that many improvements could be made. To gain the necessary

technical knowledge he went to the workshop of a leading metal worker and embosser in the West End of London and had a course of instruction from first-class craftsmen. Thus equipped, he entered with zest upon his work at the National Institute, when Sir Arthur Pearson asked him to join the staff and take charge of the illustration of Braille books. Here he found a fellow enthusiast in the late Mr. H. M. Taylor, of Cambridge, who was the originator of all the attempts at the Institute to provide illustrations for embossed books, and who had the matter much at heart.

The next few years saw a tremendous increase in the output of illustrated books, maps and diagrams for the blind, and delegates from overseas who visit the National Institute almost daily are always enormously interested in the production of maps, plans and diagrams from plates prepared by Mr. Holmes. "The Outline of History," by H. G. Wells, that popular and fascinating epitome of world history, is published by the Institute in Braille, complete with maps, plans and every diagram of which the meaning can possibly be conveyed through the sense of touch. Other famous illustrated books of which Braille "illustrated" editions have been published by the Institute in recent years are Lankester's "Science from an Easy Chair," Bell's "Story of the Heavens," Quennell's "Everyday Things in England," and Ditchfield's "Gothic Architecture."

Pioneer of a New Country.

These publications were warmly welcomed by the blind throughout the entire world. They were something new; they opened up new possibilities; and it is Mr. Holmes whom the blind regard as the pioneer of a new country, the discoverer of an "unsuspected isle in far-off seas."

The National Institute received many letters of congratulation from the Dominions and from foreign countries as each new "illustrated" publication was issued. Mr. Holmes was always seeking other lands to explore, new methods of conveying the meaning of structure, texture and colour to people without sight. He has not merely used the embossed dot of all sizes and variations in grouping; he has brought into his experiments for creating a "Blind Picture Gallery" the values of different surfaces, and by so doing has shown the relationship between touch and vision from a new aspect, almost bringing it into the same category as the relationship between taste and smell.

Mr. Holmes' skill as a designer and embosser of diagrams for the blind is known and appreciated in other countries beside our own, and he has illustrated a whole series of school books for Sweden on music, history, mechanics, optics, acoustics, magnetism and electricity.

He is an enthusiastic Esperantist, and honorary illustration editor of the international Braille magazine, *Esperanta Ligolo*, published in Stockholm by Mr. Harald Thilander.

Mr. Holmes married, in 1897, Alice, youngest daughter of the late William Leggatt, of Haxey, North Lincolnshire. They have no children.

A Delightful Personality.

An intimate friend of his gives the following impression of his personality :

"He is one of those men with whom it is a delight to chat. No one whom I have met 'chats' better. He rarely talks about anything which has failed to awaken his enthusiasm ; accordingly, all his remarks and comments have that ardent glow about them which is so refreshing in an age of blasé youth. Yet the casual observer would not detect that zest beneath his quiet, slow speech. It comes as a delightful surprise—like a sudden cascade in the smooth course of a stream . . . He has read widely and appreciatively, and, above all, he has *seen*. He once showed me a pocket sketch book without a single margin free from some face or figure, or wall, or tree, snapped up as he passed by—and kept . . . Talk to him on such subjects as merchant adventurers, navigators, and seeking men of old ; they seem to kindle his spirit with memories—perhaps of those dashing tales of derring-do which his pen and pencil conceived or illustrated in early days . . . He told me once that he liked to memorize poetry : "It's jolly nice while swaying on a tube train strap to repeat to yourself Keats' great lines :—

*"Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien."*

And I remember him telling me that during the great strike, when his daily paper never turned up in the morning for breakfast, he readily supplied the want with a volume of Herodotus ! That is typical of the man—his imagination is unfettered. Circumstances deprived him of the latest chapter of history, but he was perfectly contented to substitute for it the delightful com-

pany of the Father of History . . . Needless to say, he is entranced by a map. He enters into a map's spirit. When he was preparing a map to illustrate a Braille edition of Xenophon's *Anabasis*, it was not enough for him to copy the printed plan ; he himself had to take part in that eventful march of the Ten Thousand, and to know by heart the cities they visited and the deserts and mountains they crossed."

Working in Spite of Ill-Health.

During the last year or so Mr. Holmes has suffered a good deal from ill-health, but in spite of this, he has managed to prepare many maps and diagrams for a new Geography to be published by the Institute, and to plan the embossed illustrations for a forthcoming Braille edition of Breasted's "Conquest of Civilization."

Thousands of blind people to whom his vivid imagination and dexterous hand have revealed facts hitherto unknown to them will join with all readers of THE BEACON in wishing Mr. Holmes a speedy recovery from his long illness. His devoted service to the blind has left its mark in the history of their amelioration, and his labours will ever be remembered with admiration and deep thankfulness.



MAITRE HENRI-ROBERT, the "Grand Old Man" of the Paris Bar, and still one of the most powerful and successful pleaders, is now nearly blind. Nevertheless, says the *Evening Standard*, the leader of the French Bar refuses to abdicate. When he appears in court two young barristers, his secretaries, accompany him.

Mr. Clutha Mackenzie, Director of the Jubilee Institute for the Blind, has recently been in England investigating the modern methods of dealing with the blind.

According to the *People*, three old blind men played a not unimportant part in the youthful career of Mr. J. R. Clynes, the Home Secretary. At the age of ten he was working as a piecer at a cotton mill, earning two or three shillings a week. To supplement these scanty earnings, he read the evening papers each night to these old blind men, who rewarded him with coppers for his services. In these days of Braille newspapers and Wireless News, perhaps it might not be easy to find a similar occupation !

OBITUARY

**Sir Alexander Henderson Diack, K.C.I.E.,
C.V.O., C.B.E.**

IT is with the deepest regret that we have to report the death, after a long and painful illness, of Sir Alexander Diack, aged 67 years, late Secretary-General of the National Institute for the Blind.

Sir Alexander's long illness forced him to resign his official position at the Institute over a year ago, but he still kept in touch with the work which so interested him, and quite recently was unanimously elected a member of the Institute's Executive Council.

While at the Institute, Sir Alexander made many friends in the blind world. Those who came into frequent touch with him loved and valued the deep sincerity of his nature, and above all the innate modesty of a character which shunned the limelight as distasteful, but which all the more lightened the lives of others with its steady illumination. Although reserved in public, in private he was a most charming companion, with a fund of knowledge and a quiet sense of humour which lent picturesqueness to his conversation. His justness and tact were invaluable qualities which, joined to his wide experience and excellent capabilities, admirably fitted him for an executive position of authority. He will be deeply mourned not only by the many friends of earlier years but by those who came to know him in the last years of his life—those years marked by the splendid courage of a fight against constant pain.

The following extracts are from a long obituary notice which appeared in the *Times*, 9th July:—

Sir Alexander Diack had behind him a career of devoted public service both in India and in this country of much distinction, which might have been more widely known than it was but for his instinctive modesty.

Born on February 13, 1862, he was educated at Aberdeen University, and as an Indian Civil Service probationer at King's College, Cambridge. He passed the I.C.S. examination of 1879, when only 17, then the very low minimum age. He is said to have been the youngest man to be entered on the probation list.

In 1898, he was appointed Revenue and Financial Secretary to the Punjab Government. From 1902 he was Chief Secretary and from 1906 Settlement Commissioner. In 1910 this

post was amalgamated with the Financial Commissionership, and Diack held the position until his retirement in 1916. He served for a term as an Additional Member of the Imperial Legislative Council representing his province, and he was Vice-President of the Punjab Legislature in the last three years of his Indian career.

There are competent observers who rank Diack as only second to the famous Colonel Wace in the ranks of skilled Punjab revenue officers and settlement experts. He won the attachment of the countryside, for he was a real gentleman with a heart of gold. This was shown by the ardour with which, on retiring to this country, he plunged into War work. He first took up important work in the Ministry of Munitions, and then devoted years of labour to the cause of the disabled soldiers at the Putney centre. For this latter service he was made a C.B.E. in 1920, having been appointed C.V.O. 15 years before and K.C.I.E. on leaving India. In 1926 he accepted the position of secretary-general of the National Institute for the Blind, and threw himself into the task with enthusiasm until last year, when illness compelled his retirement.

Sir Alexander married in 1898 Ethel Mary, daughter of Mr. H. J. Ellarslie Wallace, of Galway. Their son served in the Indian Army. Sir Alexander married, secondly, in 1906, Mylesie, only daughter of Mr. Robert Alfred Molloy, and they had two sons and three daughters.

Mr. J. T. Forbes.

TO the great regret of his many friends, Mr. J. T. Forbes, one of Scotland's most successful blind men, died at the age of 71 at Dundee on the 18th of April last. Born at Montrose, and losing his sight in early boyhood, he was sent to the blind school at Dundee, where he was set to learn basket-making. But this did not satisfy his young ambition, and by strenuous efforts he gained a scholarship at the Royal Normal College and became a good musician and a very expert tuner, getting a good appointment at Brinsmead's. His heart, however, was in Scotland, and about the age of twenty-one he returned to Dundee and found occupation as tuner and music teacher. He had neither capital nor influence, but his painstaking and kindly nature, with a truly Scottish sense of

quiet humour, brought him clients who later became fast friends. Once in these early days a customer received him at the door with the words: "You tune the piano—but you're blind!"

"I cannot tune it here on the doorstep," was the reply, "but let me get to the piano and it will be all right."

Then the customer wanted to help. "Oh, yes, you shall help. Sit down in your armchair and smoke a good cigar and we'll soon get it done."

So the piano was tuned, the dummy notes played again, and the admiring customer became a lifelong friend.

With a keen eye for business, he would take orders for new instruments, repair and re-sell old ones until he was able to open a music shop in the town. His initiative, attention to detail, and determination to satisfy his clients at all costs created a prosperous business. "I knew my limitations," he once said. "I could repair pianos myself, but not always quickly enough, so I found a cabinet-maker who was out of work and taught him to fit and glue, and he soon became very clever at the work."

Thus he established a firm which, when he retired a year or two ago, comprised five music shops, each conducted by one of his six sons, at one or other of which everything pertaining to music could be bought, and with a reputation for bagpipes throughout the world. Mr. Forbes took a keen interest in musical matters in Dundee, and was an active member of the Scottish Music Merchants'

Association, of which one of his sons is president. He was an enthusiastic Esperantist, often playing chess with foreign correspondents by means of that language, and taking a holiday at the Esperanto Congresses held in different countries. In 1925 he restarted the Esperanto group at Dundee, and prepared many pupils for the Congress at Edinburgh the following August.

Probably there was no happier man in Scotland than Mr. Forbes until some three years ago, when the death of his devoted wife brought into his life a sorrow from which his spirit never recovered.

W. PERCY MERRICK.



NORTH EAST COAST EXHIBITION

THE stand devoted to the North Eastern Blind Welfare Societies at the North East Coast Exhibition, Newcastle-on-Tyne, is creating very keen interest in work for the blind. The demonstrations of various blind industries are changed as often as the regulations permit. Special demonstrations have included "An Industrial Week," (when articles made by the blind for industrial needs have been shown), "Household Week," "A Baby Week," "Trade Week," and "A Bedding Week," when specialised work in each of these branches have been exhibited. All goods displayed are for sale, and are delivered to any address in the United Kingdom. "Work" is the motto of the industrial blind, and the interest and co-operation of the public is strengthening its significance.



STAND OF NORTH-EASTERN BLIND WELFARE SOCIETIES AT THE NORTH-EAST COAST EXHIBITION, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON BRAILLE MUSIC

PARIS, APRIL, 1929

By P. T. MAYHEW.



FROM the allusions made recently to the Paris Conference on the unification of Braille music notation symbols, many, no doubt, are anxious to have a detailed account of the deliberations and findings of that important Congress, which happily ended so satisfactorily for all concerned. It is not an easy matter to deal with such a technical subject as this, and at the same time interest both the Braillist and the general reader; yet I will endeavour, as far as possible, to avoid technicalities, asking the indulgence of the reader should at times I fail.

The Congress had been made possible through the untiring energy of M. Raverat, Secretary-General of the American Braille Press. For two-and-a-half years he had travelled Europe and the United States of America, interviewing the authorities of the different countries, for the sole purpose of bringing together the delegates, who would solve, once and for all, the existing differences in the Braille music notation signs. At his press in Paris, M. Raverat's work is of an international character, so it is perfectly obvious why he should do all in his power to bring about an opportunity of arriving at one recognised system of symbols.

An Able President.

We met on April 22nd, under the auspices of the American Braille Press, 74, Rue Lauriston, Paris, and finished our deliberations a week later. M. Raverat, in the dual capacity of President and Interpreter, took the Chair, and presided most ably over the proceedings during the whole Conference. These are no idle words, for his command of the different languages, and the way in which he handled the most awkward situations, earned for him our deepest admiration.

There were ten delegates in all: three French, two Italian, two German, one American and two English (my co-delegate, Mr. Edward Watson, acting as secretary to the Conference, by common consent). A promise had been previously given by nine other

countries to abide by the decision of the Delegation.

The agenda was, for the most part, a compilation of signs from the English 1922 "Revised Key to Braille Music," in the respective languages of each delegate. A greater compliment, surely, could not have been paid than this, to the work done in England between 1912 and 1922.

A Fiery Ordeal.

It must not, however, be imagined that this fact gave England a more favourable position than the other countries, for it was not so. Round that conference table, every sign, both old and new, had to run the gauntlet, and the signs which came safely through that fiery ordeal deserve to stand as long as Braille music lasts.

Never, in all my twenty-five years' experience, have I met with men more capable, or better informed in their subject; each and everyone taking part in the deliberations knew what was expected of him; they were one and all stout defenders of their convictions; and, if converted, willing and eager listeners.

To understand something of the nature of the discussions, it must be borne in mind that others, besides ourselves, had made progress, but unfortunately along different lines, and there were those who had made but little advance, and were naturally inclined to move cautiously. America and England stood side by side. It will be remembered that, in 1918, when the English "Additions to Braille Music" appeared, and four years later the "Revised Key," America lost no time in accepting and adopting both publications. They are not slow in recognising the result of hard thinking—for, as my friend, the American delegate, said to me, the evening before the Conference: "You see! We reckoned that time and money and brains had been spent on *this thing*, and we made up our minds not to let it slip through our fingers."

A Vexed Question.

On many points, discussion was protracted, but the earnestness and "right goodwill"

of the delegates eventually brought about an agreement. The second day of the Conference was most marked in this respect. For two-and-a-half hours we wrestled with one vexed question, and there seemed no hope of a solution to our differences. Neither explanation nor illustration appeared convincing to either side.

We English-speaking delegates were stoutly defending one of our new signs against the Continentals. We were convinced that the opposition arose through ignorance of its usefulness, and to give way would be to lose one of the best symbols in the system. The situation was indeed most critical. Seriously, it might have meant the "break-down" of the Conference.

Give and Take.

At the moment when feelings were running very high, the French flung to us a challenge across the Conference table. "If *we* accept 'A,' will *you* take 'B'?" This was a brain-wave on their part, for as yet "B" had not been mentioned in the discussion. It was a sporting chance, and instantly we responded in the same sporting manner by accepting the compromise. To barter in such matters is a procedure not to be advocated, but in this instance the exchange was justifiable, as the system lost nothing, but gained all by the transaction.

The enthusiasm which followed was indeed good to see. Everybody was satisfied, and I am sure that the willingness on the part of all was to *give* as well as to *take* smoothed many a rough place ahead. From that moment, throughout the remainder of the Conference, there existed a better understanding among the delegates.

A factor which had much weight with the Delegation was the quantity of music produced by the different countries. For instance, Germany and France do much more than England with regard to "String Music," and we "Englishers," as we were often called, gave way on points of difference in this direction.

Congratulations to England.

When one takes into account that the whole system of symbols was discussed, then England is to be congratulated, for she came through having conceded only seven points: four "general" signs (of minor importance), two "string" signs and one "church-music" sign.

It will be of general interest to all to learn that the concessions made by us will cause no confusion between our existing and future Music Publications, and not a single plate of music will need re-stereotyping of the 30,000 printed by the National Institute during the last fifteen years.

On our return to England, a full report of the Conference was placed before our Braille Music Notation Committee, who unanimously approved, and recommended its adoption to the Council of the National Institute for the Blind.

Ratified by England and France.

It has since been duly ratified by them, and it is to be hoped that the other countries will lose no time in following the lead of France and England; for only a few days previous to the English assent, news arrived that the French authorities had signed the recommendations of the Conference.

When these formalities have been completed, the new symbols will be officially announced and used in all future music publications, practically throughout the world.

The Conference week was a strenuous one, but, speaking for myself, I thoroughly enjoyed it. I made many new friends, and the photograph of the Conference, of which every delegate has a copy, will ever be a reminder of the happy time we spent together during that historic week.



ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

MR. ALEC TEMPLETON, L.R.A.M., (age 19 years this July), who last year was *proxime accessit* in the highest grade of the "National Piano-Playing Contest," organized by the *Daily Express*, winning thereby the prize of a Brinsmead Grand Piano, has further distinguished himself.

Since the above event he entered as a student at the Royal College of Music, and has just gained the Chappell Exhibition for Piano Playing. This Exhibition is offered annually by Messrs. Chappell & Co., and is of the value of £30, and tenable for one year. He also won a College prize (value £10), for Composition, the work being a Trio for Wind instruments and Piano.

A recent recipient of the Degree of B.Litt. at Oxford was Miss K. L. Wood-Legh, of St. Hilda's, a blind student.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES

The Blind in Finland.

A NEW era has dawned for the blind community of Finland, says *Esperanta Ligolo*, and the controversy of many years past has culminated in the unification of all societies for the blind operating throughout the country. It was recently decided to make representations to the Government for a grant of 3,000 Finnish marks, to be used for the betterment of working conditions among the blind, and it is confidently hoped that the petition in question will come before Parliament in the near future. It is proposed to establish a home for aged and infirm blind persons, and it is further suggested that the blind community shall be represented by a Member of Parliament who will promote their interests and enlist the sympathies of the Government on their behalf.

In 1927 a Domestic Agricultural Society for the Blind was founded for the purpose of rendering practical assistance in such branches of work as can be performed by persons without sight. As soon as the project becomes financially possible it is intended to purchase an estate which will be wholly devoted to pig-breeding, poultry-rearing, bee-keeping and gardening. The house attached to the grounds would be designed to act as a hospital and a home of rest, and would provide accommodation for aged men and women. It is also suggested that a course of domestic training would be useful both to men and women.

The governing body of the Central Federation of the Blind has decided that a specialised course of instruction shall be commenced this year for the benefit of blind women, the classes to be held at the School for the Blind in Helsinki, the capital of Finland. The course of training will include domestic duties, infant nursing, manual work, etc., and will extend over a period of four weeks. During this time the trainees concerned will receive food and accommodation free of cost.

The Helsinki Association for the Blind have recently erected a large modern house, which was ready for occupation on the 1st April last. The building is seven or eight stories in height, and contains a large hall or reception room, workrooms, bathrooms, etc. It is intended that the house shall accommodate ten blind families and individuals. The house

is also provided with a children's playground, a department for handicraft instruction, a school of massage and a Braille printing section.

Massage is as popular among the blind of Finland as in Japan, and every possible facility is granted to the students. The school contains two large massage rooms and two bathrooms for men and women respectively. It also comprises three cubicles which are devoted to ray-therapy, and two cubicles for such other purposes as bandaging, etc. A cubicle also serves as a waiting-room and linen storeroom, and provision is made for patients to rest after treatment. For the benefit of the students and the general public concerned every effort is made to secure the best and latest equipment, and arrangements are based on entirely modern principles. Two eminent doctors, V. Topelius and K. Taskinen, have promised their co-operation, the last-mentioned of whom acted as instructor of massage both at the University and for twenty years at his own institution. The Finnish Government have marked their approval of the undertaking by a grant of 50,000 marks for the furnishing of the school and 15,000 marks as a stipend to Dr. Taskinen with a view to his visiting other countries to inspect their methods and equipment. The City Corporation has also agreed to donate the sum of 48,000 marks for the payment of the doctors' salaries, rent, etc.

The great evolutionary movement on behalf of the blind of Finland is largely due to the untiring efforts of August Helia, whose name is familiar beyond the limits of his own country.

French Blind Organist Prizewinner.

The first prize in the Schubert competition, conducted under the auspices of the American Society, Columbia, has been awarded to M. Guillemoteau, the blind organist of the Church of St. Raphael in Paris. The value of the prize is 9,525 francs.

Dogs' "University" in Switzerland.

A dogs' "university" has been founded in Lausanne to train dogs to lead blind men and women. Many dogs in Germany have been trained in a most wonderful way to act as guides to the blind, taking them to work and fetching them home.

CHORLEY WOOD COLLEGE SUCCESSES

BELOW we give a list of the successes attained by present and past pupils of Chorley Wood College for Girls with little or no sight in public examinations from 1927 to the present time.

March, 1927. Girton College Entrance and Scholarship Examination. *F. Picot.*

July, 1927. Oxford Local School Certificate. *D. Henwood*, with credit in five subjects (English, History, French, Maths., Scripture).

Dec., 1927. Oxford Local School Certificate. *D. Dent*, with credit in four subjects (English, History, Scripture, Botany).

July, 1928. National Froebel Union Teachers' Certificate, Part I :—

D. Henwood. Class I in all five subjects (English, History, Maths., Nature, Knowledge, I and II).

D. Dent. Class I in two subjects (English, History).

Dec., 1928. St. Christopher's Sunday School Certificate. *E. Middleton.*

Dec., 1928. Oxford and Cambridge Joint Board School Certificate. *H. Winter*, with credit in all seven subjects (Maths., Latin, French (including Oral), English, History, Music, Scripture).

March, 1929. Preliminary St. Andrew's University. *B. Watson-Taylor.*

Old Girls.

June, 1928. B.A. Honours in English. Oxford University. *A. Cunningham.*

Nov., 1928. Austrian State Examination for teaching English. *M. Heinrich.*

Nov., 1928. Certificate of the Chartered Society of Massage and Medical Gymnastic. *E. Ross.*

Certificate of the Chartered Society of Massage and Medical Gymnastic. *M. Moore.*

May, 1929. Cambridge Tripos, English, Part I (Class II, Div. I.). *F. Picot.*

June, 1929. M.A. St. Andrew's University. *J. Park.*

Music Examinations of the Associated Board.

Dec., 1927. Local Centre. Intermediate Grade. Piano. *E. Middleton.*

Local Centre. Intermediate Grade. Piano. *D. Layzelle.*

Local Centre. Advanced Grade. Piano. *H. Winter.*

July, 1927. "School" Examination. Lower Division. *M. Macara.*

"School" Examination. Lower Division. *P. Campbell.*

"School" Examination. Lower Division. *E. Dawlings.*

"School" Examination. Lower Division. *J. Paterson.*

March, 1928. Local Centre. Intermediate Grade. Piano. (Hon. Mention). *V. Orman.*

Local Centre. Advanced Grade. Harmony (Hon. Mention). *H. Winter.*

Nov., 1928. "School" Examination. Higher Division. Piano. *M. Macara.*

Dec., 1928. Local Centre. Intermediate Grade. Piano. *H. Turner.*

March, 1929. "School" Examination. Higher Division. (Distinction). Piano. *J. Paterson.*

These are most excellent results, of which any school might well be proud. Especially notable is a success such as that of Miss H. Winter, with credit in all seven subjects.



NEWS FROM FRANCE

WE are asked to correct a statement which appeared on page 12 of our June issue. By some unaccountable oversight the article translated from *Esperanta Ligolo* begins thus :—

"Until twelve years ago there was in France no specific organisation for dealing with the interests of the blind community."

What the writer in *Esperanta Ligolo* really said, literally translated is : "In our country there did not exist before the year 1917 an association of only blind people." He doubtless had in mind certain societies which exist in some countries on the Continent composed exclusively of blind members and run by them without any help from the seeing. There are, of course, many important national and local organisations for the blind in France, of which the oldest and best known is, perhaps, the Association Valentin Haüy, founded by the famous blind philanthropist, the late Maurice de la Sizeranne, and now presided over by another gifted blind Frenchman, M. P. Villey.

BLIND BOY SCOUTS

By their Scoutmaster.

(Reprinted from the "Yorkshire Post")

(This article forms an interesting sequel to the article on Blind Girl Guides which appeared in our June issue.)



WE have just returned from our first week-end camp of the season, full of the joy of life, and keenly anticipating our next venture. True, a week-end does not sound very long. In fact, we found it slipped by all too quickly, but one does not mind that when the time is filled with excitement, providing matter for reminiscence in days to come.

The villagers in the district where we camped seemed surprised to find it was possible for blind boys to become scouts. The fact that they can do so is one of the strongest arguments there could be against those misguided people who declare that the Boy Scout movement is militarist, and encourages war. In fact, troops of Blind Scouts are attached to Schools for the Blind as far removed from one another as Birmingham, Edinburgh, Leeds, London, and York, all doing their level best to make the lads' lives happier and more useful—through the medium of Scouting.

Blind Boy Cooks.

The camp site, which was lent to us by a gentleman interested in the boys, was ideally situated in a park, adjoining which were delightful woods. We packed on to our trek-cart our blankets, our "grub" and cooking utensils—the boys do their own cooking—and on the Friday night off we went. The camp was only four or five miles away, and having taken the journey steadily we arrived an hour and a half later at our destination.

The twelve of us had ample elbow room in the army hut which we used in lieu of tents, but we intend to have one or two camps under canvas before the World Jamboree in preparation for our stay in the Blind Boy Scouts' Camp at Arrowe Park.

"First night" at camp is often associated with a sleepless night. With us this was far from the case. We had our informal camp prayers together, followed by the usual period during undressing of excited chatter regarding the experiences to date, and after one or two of the old hands had murmured

"Good night," the others realised that this was the sign for silence—we never wake up the neighbourhood with "Lights Out" on a bugle—and soon we were all dreaming sweet dreams of what the morrow would bring forth.

The orderly woke us from a refreshing sleep to a perfect morning, cool and also refreshing, and giving, withal, promise of a beautiful day to follow. Obviously, with a camp such as this there were those who believed implicitly that though it may be nice to get up in the morning, it is, nevertheless, nicer to stay in bed. These miscreants were summarily impressed by their fellows with the fact that "orders is orders."

After a strip-to-the-waist wash, with its attendant invigorating effects, we had our camp prayers, and then eagerly awaited the next dish that cook had up his sleeve. It was impossible for all the lads to cook, so the elder ones were given preference. Perhaps the porridge *was* a little caught in the bottom of the pan, but the bacon—which the boys said was done when it began to curl—was voted a real success.

Our morning Church Parade at the village church was yet another item in a never-to-be-forgotten week-end. All the villagers were remarkably good to us, and we invited them down to see us "at home," an offer which was responded to.

Nature at First Hand.

Among the remainder of our doings might be mentioned the excellent opportunity the boys had of learning all about the wonders of Nature in the country at first-hand. During the time at our disposal we were able to make several fairly exhaustive collections of leaves. These we are mounting on a sheet, with the inscriptions underneath in Braille writing. The boys themselves, whilst on a ramble through the woods, found the leaves for inspection and identification by those of us who knew anything of them. Soon they were able to name correctly the more common specimens, recognising them by touch, feel, and shape.

They were able also to learn to distinguish various birds from their songs. We would

listen intently to a songster for a while, then would be told what bird it was—if anybody knew it!—and later they would try to tell the kind of bird by their own unaided efforts.

A number of the party climbed trees, and for some of them it was the first time they had ever been up a tree, while we all of us indulged in a game of cricket, using our own special ball made of cane, and "filled" with bits of tin, bells, etc., so that it can be heard when rolled along. With our portable "Morse telephone," we were able to get practice in signalling.

An interesting game, based on the sense of hearing mainly, which we played on the main road was this. The boys chose sides and

counted the motors going along the road. One side chose one direction and the other the opposite one. Points were scored. For example, a Rolls-Royce counted fifty, an Austin Seven appropriately seven, and so on. To vary the fun a Morris counted ten against. And one side finished up minus twenty-three.

It is gratifying to be able to say that there was nothing in the nature of a casualty—we had our First Aid outfit in readiness.

The whole proved a real adventure, and a real aid to a fuller understanding of what Scouting really is. Needless to say, so much of the time being spent out of doors in a burning sun, all of us returned considerably the better for an experience which we shall renew in the near future.



THE BLINDING OF AMYAS LEIGH

WESTWARD HO," one of the finest romances of the last century, closes with the blinding of its heroic central figure. The crisis is a painful, even a tragic one; and yet we feel it is perfectly consistent with the whole course of the story. Why is that? It is worth our while to analyse the last episodes and discover how it is that we can accept the hero's fate with resignation and with a sense of its artistic rightness.

Charles Kingsley was a man of profound human emotions and sympathies. There is no doubt that into his works he—like other great writers—put often more than he knew. In the tale of Amyas Leigh he gave us not merely an historical novel of the times of Queen Elizabeth, but a saga of human jealousies, loves and sufferings, that echoes to the heart of every reader. His hero is shown as a noble mind, but essentially as a mind that, at a certain point, passes beyond the limits of human presumption and pride and so lays itself open to humiliation equally tremendous.

And that, after all, is perhaps the course of every great tragedy. We are affected by these tragedies because we identify ourselves with the central figures in them; for we ourselves also strive to be noble, we ourselves are sensitive to our own ambitions and jealousies, and we ourselves know only too well that these

ambitions and jealousies may in time trip us up and bring their own punishment upon us.

To understand Kingsley's picture of the mind of Amyas Leigh, let us examine two or three of the episodes. During Amyas' absence on a voyage, Rose Salterne runs away with Don Guzman, a Spanish prisoner. We at once realise that Amyas is bitterly jealous and chagrined; but we notice, too, that his soul is in a certain conflict. He is determined to follow Rose to the West Indies. But why? Well, the reason he gives himself and his mother is, that he may find out whether or no she is *married* to the Spaniard and is happy with him. We feel that he is itching for revenge; but that as a man of high principles, he has to admit that Rose has a perfect right to choose whom she will.

Indeed, thus it turns out. When Amyas and his brother arrive in the Spanish Main, they find that Rose is not only married but devoted to Don Guzman. As honourable men, they can do no more, whatever their deeper emotions. And there the story would have ended, had not Frank, Amyas' brother, been captured by the Spaniards, and had not Rose and Frank been burned by the Inquisition.

After many wanderings on the American continent, Amyas learns this dreadful fact. Now observe how his character develops. It is made clear from the narrative that Don Guzman could not possibly have prevented this execu-

tion; indeed, he was away at the time it took place. Yet Amyas' whole soul at once turns to thoughts of revenge—and on whom? First of all upon any man who was present at his brother's death, but chiefly upon Don Guzman himself. He will have nothing to do with the beautiful white girl, Ayaconora, who had been rescued from an Indian tribe and who is devotedly in love with him. He will, in fact, not face up to the irretrievable in life and adapt himself to it.

Learning by Suffering.

Kingsley hints all the way through, that it is a Man's part to face that which cannot be cured; and that if he refuses to do so, he will have to learn his lesson by suffering. We can see clearly that Amyas' hatred for Don Guzman is merely his same old jealousy against his rival; and that his brother's death is only his *excuse* for seeking a revenge prompted at bottom by very unworthy motives. So we come to the Spanish Armada and the chapter wherein Amyas chases Don Guzman's vessel round the coast of Scotland down to Lundy Island. All readers of the novel will recall its closing pages. The Spanish vessel strikes a rock and sinks. Amyas flings his sword into the sea, cursing Heaven that has robbed him of his revenge; and a moment later a flash of lightning blinds him and lays him unconscious.

Kingsley calls this chapter "How Amyas threw his sword into the sea," and we may be sure that when an author so heads his chapter, it is to this incident that he instinctively wishes to call our attention. What is the deep meaning that Kingsley—perhaps all unwittingly—has here introduced? I think it is this: Amyas' sword, the symbol of his profession, should have been carried by him only for the defence of his country and the righting of wrongs. Instead, he has yielded it up to the service of all his worst passions—jealousy, desire for revenge and an almost childish hatred of his rival. He has chosen to blind himself to his real task as a Man, that of making the best of a bad job and facing the hard facts of life.

Spiritual Blindness.

Thus when he sees himself thwarted of his vengeance, his sword, which had become to him the symbol not of an honourable profession but of childish anger and jealousy, seems no longer useful to him. He flings it away—thus saying in a gesture "If I cannot have my revenge, then my manly profession

and, indeed, life itself is no longer valuable to me." He has blinded himself spiritually; he has cursed God; and as a logical and necessary result he lays himself open to real blindness. The lightning strikes him down.

Through suffering he comes to redemption. He awakes to realise himself as physically disabled; but he knows, also, that he has the chance *spiritually* of becoming perhaps a finer Man than he has ever been before. The last chapter is called "How Amyas let the apple fall"; and here again, I imagine, Kingsley has a deep implication in the title he has chosen. The blind Amyas sits in his own home, brooding and playing with a bowl of apples. One slips through his fingers and, in trying to recover it, he bumps his head. Ayaconora glides into the room and gives it to him, begging him to let her wait upon him. At once Amyas comprehends how strong her love is and how blind he himself had been to withhold his own fondness for her.

The Harmony of Love and Toleration.

Just as Kingsley makes Amyas throw away his sword, so he makes him weakly drop an apple and bump his head. When a man (says Kingsley, in effect) turns away from honest love towards childish spite and revenge, then he has to learn through suffering. Indeed, his very hatred and pride only serve to weaken him the more. They are sources not of strength but of insufficiency. They cause him to throw away his sword and to fumble for a dropped apple. But when he turns his mind to love and toleration, then at once the love of others flows out towards him. He becomes a harmonized being.

This analysis sounds something like a sermon, but I have no doubt that it gets at what Kingsley meant. The blinding of Amyas is not an act of God, but rather the symbol in physical form of the man's own inner blindness. This had to be fully realized by him; and the way the author has chosen to bring it home to his hero is by this symbolic physical stroke of the lightning. It is like the incident of the temporary blinding of St. Paul in the 'Acts'—the sudden flash of self-realisation that is both painful and happy. It is because this dreadful flash of self-realisation has to be experienced by many of us, that "Westward Ho" has such a profound emotional appeal to us. What the hero goes through in a symbolic and dramatic way, *we* are dimly conscious of passing through on the more spiritual and mental plane. F. C.

The BEACON

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BRAILLE IN CHINA

LITERATURE ASSOCIATION IN SHANGHAI.



In this Centenary year of the invention of Braille it is particularly interesting to learn that literature in Braille type is steadily growing not only in Europe and America but throughout the world, even in countries where civilization is not markedly progressive.

We have recently received a copy of the Constitution of the Braille Literature Association for China, formed about a year ago. The purpose of the Association is to provide the blind of China with Christian literature and writing implements at or below cost price, and to promote other activities for the welfare of the blind of China. The selling prices are fixed by the Committee after consideration of cost and income from membership fees and donations. No monetary grants are made, but free grants of writing requisites or literature can be made at the discretion of the Committee.

From an article by Miss S. J. Garland on work for the blind in China which appeared in the China Christian Year Book, we find that only about 1,000 of the blind of China have been brought under Christian instruction, and that "hundreds of thousands are still unreached and unhelped." Seven provinces are without a school for the blind, and many schools are very small and poorly equipped.

Many methods of teaching the Chinese blind to read have been tried, including the Moon system and various adaptations of the Braille system. Eventually, what is known as Union Braille, a system laid down at a conference convened in 1913 by the British and Foreign and the American Bible Societies, was adopted, and is now being used, with possibly one exception, in all the schools for the blind in Mandarin-speaking areas. It is specially adapted for use in the home teaching of the blind, and we understand that it is not even necessary for a missionary or Chinese helper to learn the Braille system before teaching it. The principle of the system need only be grasped; then, the teacher's main work is to give the pupil the sound of the Chinese character which is written over each Braille sign or word. As the pupil fingers the dots he is at the same time pointing to the character which gives the sound he wants to learn.

Printed and Hand-written Books.

The adoption of a definite system led to the formation of the Braille Literature Association, which has been warmly welcomed by missionaries. Hand-written copies of books have already been prepared by volunteers. "The Pilgrim's Progress" was, through the kindness of Mr. Yoshimoto, printed in Japan, the work being done voluntarily by blind Japanese, and at the Hill Murray School for the Blind in

Peking and the Shanghai Institution for the Blind there are Braille printing machines for the production of school-text books and other literature as required.

The promoters of this enterprise are to be congratulated. We shall always be most interested to hear from the Association, and we trust that it will be well supported from this country. The address is as follows: The Braille Literature Association for China, 3 Hongkong Road, Shanghai. Mr. Herbert Bourne is the Hon. Secretary.

The formation of this Association in the Far East, in a country unsettled by wars and War Lords, is a fact striking enough in itself. It shows that in China those interested in the welfare of the blind share in the spirit of

enterprise and desire for progress so characteristic of the blind world. Thousands of blind people, especially in Oriental countries, are relegated to the backwaters of life, but there, in spite of physical darkness, we trust that the light will burn steady—perhaps even steadier because of the isolation of the blind from political troubles.

We understand that the Chinese Government are prohibiting the blind from fortune-telling which, in the past, has almost been monopolised by the blind. But we hope that the prohibition will be a blessing in disguise, and that Braille will speed the fortunes of the Chinese blind better than fortunes foretold for others.

THE EDITOR.

BLIND OFFICE WORKERS

By W. Teignmouth Shore.

(Reprinted from "Office Appliances," Chicago, U.S.A.)

REALIZING that there is much to interest office appliance men in the effort that is being made in this country and in yours to increase the number of the blind employed in office work, I paid a visit the other day to the headquarters of the National Institute for the Blind in London. It was an interesting and eye-opening visit! I came away with a wider vision and understanding of the economic possibilities of employing the blind in our offices. It is not a question of charity or of kindness. No, it is sheer practical business politics. To quote Mr. Ford: "The blind man can, in the particular place to which he is assigned, perform just as much work and receive exactly the same pay as a wholly able-bodied man would." That was said of factory employment; it is equally true as regards office work in certain branches. The War taught us that; the War has taught you that, but as far back as 1910 you were making progress in this direction. . . . It seems to me that here is an opening for good work by office appliance manufacturers and marketers, especially those who deal in typewriters.

Expeditious and Accurate.

During my visit to the Institute a letter to me was dictated to a blind typist, who then typed it expeditiously and accurately; I have not seen better and do not expect to meet with better work. The blind typing-clerk is on a level with her sighted sister, meets her on equal terms. They can and do use the ordinary typewriters, or they can use one slightly

adjusted for them. We can trust the physician who takes his own medicine or the preacher who practices his own doctrine!

Not Limited to Typing.

There are many blind girls working as shorthand typists, extremely capable and conscientious workers. Dictation is taken down at good speeds on the Stainsby-Wayne Braille Shorthand writer, by means of which a highly-contracted form of Braille is typed on a paper ribbon. When the dictation is finished, the blind writer tears off the ribbon, and, reading the Braille with the fingers of her hands, puts it into type on an ordinary typewriter. The transcription is admirably good, as I saw. The blind typist also uses the dictaphone. Skilled blind typists take verbatim reports of meetings and conferences with perfect facility and accuracy. But this is not the limit of the work that can be done by the blind in offices; many are employed in administrative and organizing capacities. At the Institute itself blind men control departments, involving intricate and detailed work of all kinds. Public offices here have recognized the value of their work.

Office Appliance Men Can Help.

What this has to do with Office Appliances and with office appliance men is surely obvious. They can help the blind and the blind can help them; mutual help of the best kind. I hope that what I have written will prove of assistance to both parties.

THE BLIND CONTINGENT AT THE WORLD JAMBOREE

By H. M. Lochbead, Scoutmaster, 77th Edinburgh Troop, Royal Blind School, Edinburgh.



THE Boy Scout movement came of age this year, and the Jamboree was decided upon to celebrate that event. Forty-two nations were represented and there were upwards of fifty thousand Scouts under canvas at Arrowe Park, near Birkenhead. For the first time in Scout history a blind and a deaf contingent took part in the Jamboree. I cannot in this brief article give any idea of the Jamboree as a whole, but I will try to give some account of the experiences of the blind contingent.

Four Blind Troops were represented in the Blind Contingent: Royal Institution for the Blind, Birmingham; Henshaw's Institution for the Blind, Manchester; King's Manor School, York; and Royal Blind School, Edinburgh. All told there were 38 boys and 11 officers and rovers. Of the boys, I think ten were totally blind.

Taking Up Camp.

After some deliberation, it was decided that our contingent should take up camp on Sunday, July 28th, three days before the official opening, and we were all glad that we did so as we got to know the lie of the land before the camp filled up. Edinburgh and Manchester were first on the field and found our site, a plot of grass 25 yards square, to be pleasantly situated with a wood behind, Belfast Road and Hawk Alley on either side, and the site for the Deaf Contingent in front. Our first view of the camp was in rain, and we continued to see it in rain for the next nine or ten days. Tent pitching proceeded rapidly and soon we had enough tents up to ensure snug quarters for ourselves and our kits. Our celerity in pitching camp seemed to impress the camp authorities, but there is nothing like real wet rain to make a scout hurry. Birmingham arrived in the evening and were glad to find a hot meal ready for them before they set about pitching their tents. The York boys did not arrive until Tuesday.

On Monday morning we settled down to normal camp life. Mr. Spurgeon of Birmingham acted as Scoutmaster for the contingent and the other officers were assigned their

various duties. The boys were divided into five squads, each squad acting for one meal. As we are used to camping in small numbers, we found the cooking for fifty a rather serious undertaking and as a consequence the boys themselves did less of the actual cooking than they would have done at an ordinary summer camp. However, each squad had responsible work to do, in drawing water and stores, preparing potatoes, etc., washing up and breaking wood and the hundred other jobs inseparable from camp life. These tasks were made more difficult by the rain-sodden condition which prevailed for the greater part of the Jamboree and the mud which soon became the outstanding feature of camp life. However, there is a funny side to even rain and mud and our contingent certainly had its fair share of humour.

Mixing with Foreign Scouts.

The great feature of the Jamboree was the mixing with scouts from other lands, and the blind scouts mixed well. After the morning work was over, the boys in twos and threes toured the camp, making friends with all sorts of people. The language difficulty was no real hindrance and our boys were soon at home in many a foreign camp. The Austrians, encamped across Belfast Road, were very friendly, and especially among the Hungarians and the boys from Ceylon we had many friends. Swap and barter were the most amusing pursuits, and the collection of foreign badges, buttons, coins, woggles, etc., which we have amassed is almost appalling. The bright Royal Stuart tartan kilts of the Edinburgh boys were very dear, especially to the Americans, and there were many offers to trade a kilt for an American uniform. An enterprising kilt merchant might have made his fortune in a day.

By the Camp Fires.

In the evening were the camp fires. There were some eight or nine international camp fires which were attended with great enjoyment and perhaps even better were the private camp fires of different contingents to which guests of all nationalities were invited. Many of our boys were guests at these and came back with glowing accounts of the times they had had with the Hungarians, Austrians

or French. Perhaps the most satisfactory point of all this mixing was the way our fellows were treated as ordinary scouts. This fact did much to make our scouts feel quite at their ease and consequently they enjoyed themselves fully.

The Visit of the Chief Scout.

The Contingent took part in the principal rallies, but we did not take part in the others as massed rallies are not of much interest to blind scouts. We were allowed to line the front of the grand stand for the Prince of Wales rally and heard every word of his fine address and the Chief Scout's reply. The Chief himself visited the camp on two occasions. On the second of these all the officers were absent at an international conference dealing with work among blind, deaf and cripple scouts. The Chief rode into our site on horseback, chatted with the boys, showed them his horse and shook hands with some of them. It was a red letter day on our calendar.

To vary the camp routine, expeditions were arranged to places of interest round about. These were quite informal and were arranged by ourselves often at quite short notice. Two parties were shown over a large C.P.R. Liner in Liverpool, another visited Chester, two parties sailed from Liverpool to Llandudno and spent the day there. While at Llandudno the Edinburgh boys were asked if they could speak English by some enterprising urchins on the pier who were evidently rather surprised when we made ourselves intelligible. Another party visited the Workshops for the Blind in Liverpool, as we had a very hearty invitation to do so from two of the workmen who visited us in camp. Afterwards this party had the privilege of being shown Liverpool Cathedral by the Bishop's Chaplain, who spared no pains to show the boys the wonders of that splendid building.

A Great Glorious Mass of Experiences.

However, all good things come to an end, and Sunday, August 11th, came round and our camp was struck. We said good-bye to our foreign friends and to our chums from the other blind Schools, packed our kits, struck our tents and took the road for home. We shall talk of the Jamboree for years to come, but it is curious how certain meals stand out in our recollections. A good many restaurants lost money by agreeing to refresh us at a fixed price during our expeditions and some of the bumper meals in camp seem almost to have a

halo around them. These memories will sort themselves out in time, but at present the Jamboree strikes us as a great glorious mass of experiences, all hopelessly mixed up together. I am afraid I have failed to give any adequate idea of the work and fun, the mud, the meals, the rallies and the mixture of languages and costume which all blended together to make the Jamboree.

Not a Race Apart.

In conclusion, I think our little camp has done much for scouting amongst the blind in many countries. At the conference I mentioned above, many influential scouters from overseas and from foreign countries expressed their intention of introducing scouting amongst the blind in their own lands. We learned there that many countries have already begun blind troops and, as arrangements are being made for international co-operation in this matter, I have no doubt but that good results will follow. Apart from scouting, we hope that we did something to bring home to the general public that blind boys are not a race apart.



RECITALS BY BLIND ORGANISTS.

THE Rector of St. Clement Danes, the Rev. Pennington-Bickford, has again asked the National Institute to arrange a series of six Recitals by Blind Organists at his Church. These Recitals take place in the Lunch Hour at 1.10 p.m. and the Organists for September are as follows:—

Mr. R. T. Stephenson, L.R.A.M.,	
A.R.C.O.	on the 4th
Mr. H. C. Warrilow, F.R.C.O. ,, ,,	11th
Mr. J. Eric Hunt, F.R.C.O. ... ,, ,,	18th
Mr. S. Kerry, F.R.C.O., L.R.A.M. ,, ,,	25th

Blind Composers are, naturally, well represented upon the programmes and in addition to Dr. Alfred Hollins, and Mr. Wm. Wolstenholme, MUS.BAC., F.R.C.O., who have achieved world-wide reputation, the following belonging to a younger generation have been represented, by interesting and attractive numbers, in the Recital Series already given:—

Wm. Avery, F.R.C.O., T. Percival Dean, F.R.C.O., L.R.A.M., H. W. Greenhill, F.R.C.O., Samuel Kerry, F.R.C.O., Sinclair Logan, L.R.A.M., A.R.C.M., Leonard A. Marsh, MUS.BAC., F.R.C.O., T. G. Osborn, F.R.C.O., H. J. Pyne, F.R.C.O., H. F. Watling, F.R.C.O., L.R.A.M.

NEWS OF THE BLIND WORLD

Blind Choir at Wedding.

THE singing of the choir of the Royal Victoria School for the Blind was an unusual feature at a wedding which took place recently at St. Mary's Church, Ponteland, Northumberland.

Ensured Weekly Income of 25s.

According to the *Lancashire Daily Post*, the Burnley Corporation have decided that necessitous blind persons who have attained the age of 21 should be granted assistance to ensure that they will have an income of £1 5s. a week. In the case of a man and wife who are both blind the assistance will enable them to have a joint income of £2 a week.

Health Minister and the Blind.

Mr. Arthur Greenwood, the Minister of Health, in laying the foundation stone of the new workshops for the blind in Sheffield, expressed the hope that within a relatively short time no great centre of population would be without adequate provision for the employable blind. The blind had special claims, he said, but he thought there was sometimes misplaced sympathy, for some of the happiest people he had known were sightless. What they lost in not being able to see they apparently gained in the development of the inner graces.

Valuable Gifts to the Blind.

Two interesting gifts have recently been made to the National Institute for the Blind.

One was a Bank of England Note for £500, accompanied by an unsigned letter asking that it should be used for the blind since "I am old and shall not want it." It was received in a plain envelope from a South Coast seaside resort, and the Institute wishes to express its deepest gratitude to the giver.

The other is the bequest of Mr. Charlie Howard, of Chichester, who bred and raced the well-known horse, Priory Park. His racehorses are to be sold and one-fifth of the proceeds and his money on deposit and private account he leaves to the National Institute "as having been blessed with good eyesight during my life I have great sympathy for those who are blind."

Free Trams for the Blind.

Following the example of the Manchester and Ashton-under-Lyne corporation tramways, the Stalybridge, Hyde, Mossley and Dukinfield Tramways and Electricity Board have decided, says the *Manchester Evening News*, to allow blind people from Manchester and Ashton to travel free on their cars and buses.

A condition is that blind persons must possess blind passes, issued by the Manchester and Ashton Tramways, and that they must be accompanied by a fare-paying guide.



GARDENING AT CHORLEY WOOD COLLEGE FOR GIRLS WITH LITTLE OR NO SIGHT.

Blind Composer's End.

The French blind composer, Francois Bouriello, who wrote a number of operas and ballets and was a friend of Saint Saëns, has, according to the *Daily Herald*, died practically penniless at the age of 63.

Bouriello, who composed a suite of "Studies on 'The Jungle Book' of Kipling," adds the Central News, never came into general favour with the public, although some of his large-scale works were performed in public. He was a native of Algiers.

Delius and Braille Music.

The National Institute recently sent a Braille copy of the song "To the Queen of my Heart," by Delius, to the famous composer (who is now blind) together with a booklet descriptive of Braille Music and its problems.

In a charming letter of acknowledgement Mr. Delius says that the Braille Music Notation System is "certainly a wonderful invention which must give great pleasure to the blind."

New Series of Dramatic Readings for the Blind.

The Dramatic Readings given by Mrs. Flannery and her Company in the Armitage Hall of the National Institute for the Blind will be recommenced on the 1st October next, and thenceforth they will be given on the first Tuesday of each month, beginning at 6.30 p.m. All blind people are cordially welcomed to these excellent Readings.



INTERNATIONAL NOTES

Saving the Baby's Eyesight in U.S.A.

ACCORDING to the United States Department of Labour (Children's Bureau), the proportion of children entering schools for the blind in the United States, who lost their sight because of ophthalmia neonatorum, has been greatly reduced during the last 20 years. The National Society for the Prevention of Blindness ascribes this to the measures which have been taken, either by law or by health-department regulation, in 44 States and 3 Territories requiring or urging the use of a prophylactic in the eyes of the new-born, the prophylactic being supplied free to doctors and midwives in all but 12 States and 1 Territory; 30 States make provision on the birth certificates for reporting its use.

Blindness in the Holy Land

THE Venerable Order of St. John of Jerusalem has for many years maintained in the City of Jerusalem a hospital for the treatment of diseases of the eye. In its 37th annual report, the Chapter records a visit to the hospital of Princess Mary, Viscountess Lascelles, and Viscount Lascelles in April, 1928. In reply to the Grand Prior's appeal after the earthquake in 1927, the sum of £12,947 was received and expended.

The report of the Warden (Lieutenant-Colonel J. C. Strathearn, M.D.) states that the number of new patients seen during last year was 20,390 and the total consultations numbered 94,832. The patients admitted to hospital were 1,270, and the number of operations performed was 3,504. Classified according to

religion, 14,296 of the new cases were Moslems, 3,735 Christians, and 2,359 Jews. The numbers of new patients and the total consultations were the largest yet recorded. That increase was due to the fact that for the first time there had been during the year an open and unrestricted clinic on six days in the week.

Of the new cases, 1,813 were blind in one eye and 441 in both. The term "blind" included the economically blind whose vision could not count fingers at a distance of a metre. Nearly 70 per cent. of this "blindness" could be traced to acute conjunctivitis, which was always present to some extent in the Holy Land, but assumed epidemic form in the hot weather. The epidemic last year was especially virulent. The clinics at Acre, Beersheba, Gaza, Nablus, Ramleh and Tulkarm dealt with 18,494 new cases, 147,574 consultations, and 2,534 operations.

Traffic Signals for the Blind in New Zealand.

ACCORDING to *The Autocar*, approval has been given by the New Zealand Jubilee Institute for the Blind to a scheme drawn up by the Auckland Automobile Association regarding the signals to be adopted by blind persons, when crossing streets, which will be immediately recognised by motorists. Instructions have, as a consequence, been given to the inmates of the Blind Institute that blind persons should, in future, when endeavouring to cross streets, hold one hand upright over the head.

VISION.

*God is my sight,
Through Him I see;
He holds my hand
His love leads me.*

*God is my sight,
He makes all clear;
In light I walk
Since He is here.*

*God is my sight,
He knows the way;
In His dear love
I cannot stray.*

*God is my sight,
He guides me right;
I'll rest in peace,
Secure to-night.*

GRENVILLE KLEISER

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

Mathematics Success.

MR. R. W. BONHAM has secured a Second in Mathematics at Oxford University.

Blind Girl Graduate at Columbia University.

We understand that Miss Ruth Bierman, a blind girl, has graduated fifth on the list from the Teachers' College in New York with the degrees of Bachelor of Science and Master of Arts.

It is stated that she is the only sightless student ever to have obtained the degree of M.A. from Columbia University.

Blind Girl Student's Success.

Miss Janet Lauderdale Park, of Moray Place, Strathbungo, Glasgow, a blind girl student at St. Andrews, gained the degree of M.A. after three years' study, and her story was given recently in the *Daily Express*. An accident at the seaside when fourteen years of age resulted in the gradual total loss of her eyesight.

Before total eclipse came she had already entered the Chorley Wood College for the Blind, Herts., where she underwent a five years' course of training, including the use of the Braille system. During this period she successfully passed the entrance examination for St. Andrews University, and three years ago took up residence in the Residential Hall for women students there.

This clever and courageous student obtained her degree in the short space of three years and without receiving any special facilities on account of her disability.

Miss Park intends pursuing her scholastic career after the vacation, and has already entered at Jordanhill Training College for Teachers, Glasgow, her ambition being ultimately—in conjunction with a friend similarly handicapped—to start a college for the blind in Africa.

A Successful Pianist and Organist.

Mr. H. V. Spanner, Mus. Bac., F.R.C.O., L.R.A.M., is rapidly gaining a reputation as a special Coach for the examinations of the Royal College of Organists. New candidates from all parts of the country frequently take a course of finishing lessons from Mr. Spanner before proceeding to the actual examination.

Not only have a number of candidates passed as a result, but, in the Fellowship exams., Mr. Spanner's candidates have occasionally secured the Lafontaine or Turpin Prizes, distinctions awarded to those who obtain the highest number of marks.

Mr. Spanner has just returned from Switzerland, where he has been attending the First Anglo-American Summer Holiday Music Conference for British Empire and American

Musicians and Educationists at Lausanne. Mr. Harvey Grace asked Mr. Spanner to play at the Cathedral, and to give one of the mid-day concerts in the University. At the University he played MacDowell's Sonata Tragica, and before he played he told the audience that he

felt very proud to be able "to represent the magnificent work which is being done among the blind by the National Institute for the Blind." At the organ he played a Prelude in C by Wolstenholme which he describes as "a magnificent but little-known work."



INSTRUCTORS AND PUPILS OF THE MASSAGE SCHOOL,
NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND.

East London School Successes.

The East London Home and School for Blind Children announce that all their candidates were successful at the School Examination of the R.A.M. and R.C.M. Associate Board.

They were: Higher Division, Albert Wade; Elementary Division, Phyllis Thurlow; Preliminary Division, Rutherford Meek, Edward Mack, Alec Richardson.

WORCESTER COLLEGE FOR THE BLIND

SPEECHES AT ANNUAL PRIZE-GIVING



R. G. F. MOWATT presided at the annual prize distribution in connection with the Worcester College for the Blind, held in the College Gymnasium. Others present on the platform were: Dr. F. W. Pember (Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University), the Dean (Dr. W. Moore Ede), Capt. Ian Fraser, Mr. L. Sandford, Mr. J. R. Anthony and Mr. A. J. W. Kitchin (Governors), and the Headmaster (Mr. G. C. Brown). There was a large attendance, many visitors coming from afar. Before the speeches there was an organ recital by Mr. W. Wolstenholme.

Mr. L. Sandford referred to the loss the College had sustained by the deaths of two of its most distinguished students—Sir Washington Ranger and Rev. Norman McNeile. They were two of four members of that brilliant intellectual constellation on which Mr. Blair founded the College. Education for the blind was given an excellent start by these four men.

Mr. Mowatt spoke of the developments that had taken place at the College.

Worcester College for the Blind was becoming well known, and it was no exaggeration to say that after years of struggling, after dark days, it was taking its place on a footing with the leading public schools in this country. It was a wonderful achievement; the public schools knew Worcester College, and the crews from any of the leading rowing schools were quite prepared to meet Worcester College on their own rivers or home waters. A history of the achievements of the blind in England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales was being compiled, and the man who was compiling it had told him that the thing that struck him most was that all the efforts that were being made to ameliorate the lot of the blind had been started by blind men.

The Headmaster (Mr. G. C. Brown) apologised for the absence among others of Lord Cobham, Lord Plymouth, the Bishop of Worcester, Mr. Stanley Baldwin, the Archdeacon of Worcester, the Mayor (Col. Albert Webb), Lord Dudley, Mr. Guy Nickalls, and the Rev. C. Creighton.

The year had been one of progress. All had done their duty, the governors in providing new buildings, the staff in teaching, and the

boys themselves. He dwelt for some time on the extension of the buildings, which would handicap them no further with regard to accommodation. They had now a worthy dining hall and space for forms instead of classes, and credit for this was due to the vision of an old boy, Mr. Mowatt. The arranging of the boys in forms had resulted in a distinct improvement in the work of the year, and made classification much easier.

After calling attention to the Honours List, Mr. Brown said that rowing was quite an important part of their work. The crew were now fully acclimatised to shell boats, and they were quite proud that their opponents included Westminster, St. Paul's, and Eton. No longer were they looked upon as doing quite well because they were handicapped. That was rarely referred to now, but they were judged by their rowing alone, and in view of their fine race with a two-stone heavier Eton crew they had now been awarded an annual fixture.

As they continued to make progress in rowing so in chess. The College Chess Club had a remarkable record. They again won the Public Schools' Championship of Worcestershire and the Senior Club Championship of Worcestershire, the latter a fine achievement, because they played strong town teams. An old man T. H. Tylor, represented England against the International Masters' team at Ramsgate, and in seven games was only defeated twice. He made a draw against the redoubtable Capablanca.

The problem of finding work for the boys after leaving school was still unsettled, but was not so unpromising as on the last occasion he mentioned it. They had in the near future the prospect of openings in connection with insurance companies which would help boys of an academic mind to receive a good living. Two boys had received excellent training as masseurs and had started a practice with excellent prospects.

Dr. F. W. Pember, after distributing the prizes, said that for many years past there had been a steady stream of excellent students coming to Oxford from the College. He hoped that the stream would never shrink, but would rather be augmented.

Captain Ian Fraser remarked that the world for young blind men going out to meet it was

full of trials and hard knocks but there were smooth places and kind as well as rough people.

THE PRIZE LIST.

School Prizes (in memory of Sir Arthur Pearson)—Classics: R. F. Ash. Mathematics: J. Metcalfe. Modern Languages: G. J. I. Miller. History: A. R. N. Cross. English Literature: P. A. Hughes.

Examination Prizes (in memory of Sir Arthur Pearson)—O. and C. School Certificate with Six Credits: G. J. I. Miller, E. R. Grant, P. A. Hughes, A. R. N. Cross.

Form Prizes.—V. Form Prize, R. O. Brown; English (in memory of H. L. Himing), J. E. P. Pollard-Lowsley. V.: Commercial, Form Prize, C. C. G. Nock. IV: Form Prize, R. H. Pettifer; French, W. H. Jones. III: Form Prize, H. Booth; Latin, J. E. Jarvis; General Proficiency, G. Bromley; II: Form Prize, R. W. T. Thorp; General Proficiency, J. D. Dawlings. I: Form Prize, V. Uppenden.

Music Prize.—F. Emery.

General Improvement.—O. P. Khosla.

Chess Medal (presented by the British Chess Federation).—A. R. N. Cross.

Old Boys' Distinctions.—T. H. Tylor, M.A., B.C.L., Balliol College, Oxford and Inner Temple, First Class Honours in Bar Final, Prize for first in his Inn; W. Wolstenholme, Mus.Bac., Oxford, Honorary Fellowship of the Royal College of Organists; A. Templeton, National Pianoforte Playing Competition, First Prize in his District. Second Prize in the United Kingdom, Gold Medal, Bournemouth Musical Meeting; R. W. Bonham, Oxford University Chess Championship; T. H. Tylor, selected to represent Great Britain v. team of Foreign Chess Masters, Ramsgate.



RECEPTIVE MEMORIES OF THE BLIND.

Progress of Royal Normal College Pupils.

AN interesting interview with an official at the Royal Normal College and Academy of Music for the Blind, Upper Norwood, was reported recently in the *Evening Standard*.

"It is astonishing" said the official, "how many students pick up a difficult piece of music simply through hearing it and having the notes read out to them once or twice. The notes seem to imprint themselves on their memories. Many of them can play the piece immediately after. By this means they acquire extensive repertoires.

"Many of our old students hold responsible musical posts. Others, like Mr. Alfred Hollins, the blind organist composer; Mr. Sinclair Logan, the baritone; and Mr. Ronald Gourley, are frequently heard by the public.

"The girls are better than the boys at Braille shorthand and typing, which, according to experts, is often far above the average standard of sighted typists.

"I think the blind boy or girl now has almost as big a chance as any other. They enjoy their sports, too, as much as anybody.

"Look at their swimming," he said, leading the way to the swimming bath.

There six blind boys were doing double-dives, forward and backward somersaults, and life-saving exercises.

There were girls in the gymnasium on roller skates, doing fancy steps and weaving patterns.

At the College's Annual Prize Festival, Lady Lamington distributed the prizes. She was accompanied by Lord Lamington, chairman of the Board of Governors. General Sir Archibald Hunter, who presided, referred to the death in February last of Mr. Guy M. Campbell. Mr. Campbell's death, he said, was a great loss, but was mitigated so far as the college was concerned by the fact that Mrs. Campbell had been appointed to succeed him.

The visitors were afforded opportunities of seeing classes of blind students at work in geometry, arithmetic, nature study, type-writing, and Braille shorthand. There was a display of swimming and life-saving, gymnastics and dancing, followed by a musical programme. The following were among the successes gained during the year:—

Royal College of Music Associateship (singing), Dorothy Allen; Royal College of Organists, Associateship, Harry Coleman; Royal Academy of Music Licentiate, George Fountain, Robert Savage; London College of Music Associateships (pianoforte), Frank Hartley, Ronald Lambourne; and a number of certificates of the Associated Board of the Royal Academy and Royal College of Music.



THE BRAILLE CENTENARY.

AN erroneous impression has somehow got abroad that the Braille Centenary Festival, organised by the National Institute for the Blind to commemorate the Braille centenary year (1929) is to take the form of a big central performance in London of Mendelssohn's "Hymn of Praise."

Instead of this, the Institute is relying on the individual help of its friends, each in his own locality. It is suggested that there are few churches which could not render at least some excerpt from the cantata, if only the duet and chorus "I waited for the Lord," and at the same time arrange for a contribution to be sent to the National Institute as an act of thanksgiving that the sighted and the blind at last share the advantages of print.

All offers of assistance and donations should be sent to the Organizing Secretary, Braille Centenary Appeal, National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, W.1.

REPORTS FROM THE INSTITUTIONS

National Library for the Blind.

IN 1908 there were 500 embossed volumes in stock at the National Library, and the annual circulation amounted to 25,000. To-day, there are 12,191 volumes in stock, and the annual circulation is 231,208. These figures must be intensely gratifying, first to the National Library itself as direct proof of the success and progressive character of its work, and secondly, to all who have the welfare of the blind at heart.

A knowledge of Braille is the first step in the conquest of blindness, and habitual reading in Braille is the best method of banishing the limitations of blindness. It is obvious, therefore, that the extent of the dissemination of Braille literature is a true criterion of the growth of self-education in the blind world.

The Report draws attention to the greater wear and tear of volumes consequent on wider and more rapid circulation. The repairs and rebinding involve a very serious cost to the Library. Thus, during the year, 2,430 worn volumes have been deleted from stock and must be replaced. The flood damage in January, 1928, destroyed, in addition, 5,000 volumes, so the Library has plenty of work in front of it.

It should be remarked that, apart from circulating books, the Library benefits the blind by employing ninety-eight blind copyists, to whom payments amounting to £3,009 8s. 2d. were made during the year. This, the Report points out, is only made possible by the Exchequer Grant in aid of the Library's Home Workers' Schemes. The number of voluntary writers, for whose wonderful work no praise is too high, now amounts to 370; they have produced during the year 429 complete works in 1,577 large volumes.

Western Counties' Association for the Blind.

We are glad to hear from the Report that the South Western Collecting Scheme in co-operation with the National Institute for the Blind is progressing satisfactorily. The Central Register in the area covered by the Association shows a total of 5,750 blind persons. Of these 204 are under the age of 16; 734 are employed, either in workshops, as home workers, or elsewhere; 5 are trained but unemployed; 104 are under training; and 3

have no training but are trainable. The remainder are unemployable. There is evidently a great need for wireless sets in the area, only 700 free licences having been applied for. The reasons for this, according to the Report, are that as a rule crystal sets are of no use, and that as there is no Broadcasting Station in the area, there is no chance of appealing by wireless for the necessary funds.

Two interesting developments in the area are noted: The opening of the new "Sunshine" Home for Blind Babies at Court Grange, Abbotskerswell, the gift of the Rev. A. T. Dence and Mrs. Dence to the National Institute for the Blind, and of the new Home for the Aged Blind near Plymouth.

Five blind babies from the area are in the National Institute's "Sunshine" Homes, and application for admission of two more is shortly being made.

Work in connection with the prevention of blindness, the Report considers of first importance.

The new Local Government Act, 1929, will necessitate some re-adjustment of the administration of work in the area.

Greater London Fund for the Blind.

The Eighth Report of the Fund is the first under the management constituted by the new agreement governing the Fund, and contains a sketch of the policy which has culminated in the present arrangement. The Fund has distributed since its foundation £205,000—a highly creditable achievement. Special attention is drawn to the appeal broadcast last year over the wireless by Captain Sir Beachcroft Towse, V.C., which realised £3,143, one of the largest amounts received during the year. "Sir Beachcroft is one of the greatest assets of the Fund," says the Report. Another great friend of the Fund is the Rt. Hon. T. P. O'Connor, P.C., M.P., whose four annual postal appeals have raised £5,400. Special tribute is paid to the indefatigable Secretary, Mr. H. C. Preece, and his blind and sighted Staff. The Fund helps 8,700 blind people.

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Institution for the Blind.

This Institution can now look back over 70 years of valuable work, maintained and

developed year by year. Development has been specially rapid during recent years, the Institution now rendering the following services under the scheme approved by the Ministry of Health on behalf of the Councils of the City and County of Leicester and County of Rutland: Registration, visiting, care of blind babies, education and after-care, industrial training, workshop employment, supervision of home workers, augmentation of earnings, home teaching, maintenance of library of embossed books, holiday and convalescent home facilities, and assistance to the aged, infirm and unemployable.

The cost of relief to the blind and services directly for their benefits has steadily risen at the rate of £1,000 per annum, last year reaching nearly £11,000.

OBITUARY

Miss Elizabeth Howard Hodgkin.

IT is with deep regret that we announce the sudden death after an operation on July 15th of Miss E. H. Hodgkin, one of the Proprietors and Editors of the Braille Magazine *Santa Lucia*, published for the Proprietors by the National Institute for the Blind.

Her death is a great loss to the world of the blind, to whom she devoted so many years of valuable service.

The *Santa Lucia* press was started in March, 1889, by three sisters—the Misses Janet, Mariabella Eliot and Elizabeth Howard Hodgkin—and originated through their first attempts to read and write Braille that they might teach a blind friend. This interest led to the idea of publishing a monthly magazine in Braille type. It was aptly called the "Four-in-Hand"—"for," said one of the Editors, "there were four of us, and the magazine was always in hand." (The fourth was Mrs. Hodgkin who did all the sewing required).

When the demand increased, a small office was set up at Richmond and the outcome was the *Santa Lucia Magazine*. The title was taken from the name of that saint who, legend states, tore out her beautiful eyes because they proved too great a snare for her heathen lover.

The object of the editors was not to publish new matter, but a selection of topical articles and stories by well-known writers, in fact, to keep the reader *au fait* with affairs of the day.

The first numbers of *Santa Lucia* appeared on March 7th, 1889. Since that date it has been issued monthly, and its contents have

included biographical and historical sketches, dramatic and other poems, papers on natural history and science, foreign customs and characteristics, serial papers, antiquarian papers, reviews of new books and musical notes.

Almost at the outset the number of magazines sent out monthly amounted to about 120. This has since increased to over 300.

In addition to taking a very large part in this valuable publishing enterprise for the blind, Miss Hodgkin was interested in work for the blind generally. Right up to the time of her death, she was a true friend to the sightless, and was always trying to help cases of hardship and need. She will long be remembered by those she so generously helped.

Miss Ethel Annie Helen Bridge.

WE deeply regret to announce the death of Miss E. A. H. Bridge, which took place at the Royal East Sussex Hospital, Hastings on 13th August.

She was Matron of the Convalescent and Holiday Home, Quarry Hill, St. Leonards, conducted by the National Institute for the Blind, and had occupied this position since the Home was opened in July, 1925. By her unflinching kindness and tact she had won the affection and esteem of all the visiting guests, and her loss will be mourned by all those who had the good fortune to come into contact with her.

The interment took place at the Hastings Cemetery on the 17th August. In addition to the attendance of relatives and friends, the National Institute for the Blind and other Organisations were represented at the funeral.

Miss Bridge started her training at the age of 20 years, and gained her first position as a member of the private staff of H.R.H. Princess Christian's Nurses at Windsor in 1894. In 1895 she acted as locum tenens for the Matron of the Windsor Royal Dispensary and Infirmary. She worked in the Bombay Plague Hospitals in 1898, and afterwards went to Lady Dufferin's Hospital at Karachi from 1902 to 1907.

Later she was appointed to the Vryburg District Hospital, South Africa, and in 1912 took up the position of nurse superintendent of the Public Hospital, Georgetown, Demerara. She left there in 1918 to take up an appointment as Matron of the Colonial Hospital, Gibraltar, which she held until 1922. The next year she became Matron at the Italian Hospital, Queen's Square, which she left in 1925 for the Convalescent and Holiday Home.

LEAD DOGS FOR THE BLIND

Mrs. Dorothy Harrison Eustis is an American woman, who for three years has trained dogs in Switzerland to lead blind people. Below we reprint extracts from her address at the Colony Club in New York.



BEFORE I tell you about the work of Shepherd dogs as leaders of the blind, I want to tell you a little about the dogs themselves. The dogs I breed and train are the so-called police dogs, which in reality are German Shepherd Dogs. The German Shepherd Dog is of pure blood, born and bred for centuries to guard Nature's most helpless animal, the sheep.

In Germany, where he works for his living, no one is ever bitten or ever suffers any harm from him; here, where he is overbred, overfed, and underexercised, he seems to have joined our criminal class.

I want you to see the Shepherd as I see him—a Niagara of energy going to waste, an intelligence, a public servant and useful citizen. At Fortunate Fields, my breeding and training station in Switzerland, we have been working for five years to develop this energy. Our dogs go out from our six departments as Police dogs with the State Police, Red Cross dogs, and Liaison dogs for the Swiss Army, Criminal Trailing dogs, Prison and Railroad Yard Guards, and lastly and most important of all as Leaders for the Blind.

The Blind Man's Eyes.

Now the blind man has a burden which he calls a handicap; he makes a marked difference between affliction which entails suffering and handicap which puts him at a disadvantage. Because he has lost his eyesight is no reason why he should lose his self-respect by being a burden to other people. The German Shepherd Dog steps into the breach and lifts that burden by becoming the blind man's eyes.

You will take that statement with the same grain of salt that I did when I heard it three years ago. I went to Germany to one of the Government Schools for training dogs to lead the blind. In Germany every war blinded man capable of handling a dog has one provided by the Government with an allowance sufficient for the dog's support.

I went a sceptic. Even I didn't believe that a blind man's life could be so completely entrusted to the care of a dog. I expected to

see an instructor with eyes bandaged give a demonstration with a special dog. I saw nothing of the kind. What I saw were fifteen blinded soldiers quietly and naturally finishing their three weeks' course of instruction with their dogs, and the first one I saw converted me. He was coming down the steps of the dormitory with his dog harness and leash in one hand and his cane in the other on his way to the enclosure where the dogs run for half an hour before working. In his three weeks there he must have come down those steps and along that short path six to eight times a day and yet his feet shuffled and faltered and he groped with his cane. As he reached the gate and called his dog, she came up to him, putting her head in his hand to let him know she was there. I shall never forget the change that came over that man as with his dog in the leading harness he turned away from that gate. He could SEE. One minute an uncertain groping blind man, the next he passed me an assured person with his dog well in hand, whistling a little tune and feeling for a cigarette. He was off for his afternoon work and I asked permission to follow him. He took a walk of about forty-five minutes through the streets of Potsdam and went so fast that I had to run to keep up to him. Although I jostled heaps of people in my haste, he and his dog never touched a soul. As I watched them in the crowd it seemed impossible that it was not the *man* directing the dog when to stop for kerbs and traffic, when to cross the street or to steer him around obstacles and people, so perfectly did the two work together. And so it has been with the work of all the men that I have watched and studied in the past three years.

A Slowly Developed Success.

Of course this result has not been accomplished in a day. It has been developing over a period of twelve years. Its success is shown by the fact that the first war blind are now coming back to be trained with their second dogs.

A year ago an article that I wrote called the "Seeing Eye" appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post*, describing the work of dogs to lead

the blind. I had loads of letters from blind people asking where they could get such dogs. They all wanted dogs for themselves, but one blind man asked not for a dog for himself but, if what I had written were true, he would like to prove it in order to help the blind of America to have their dogs. He was Morris S. Frank of Nashville, Tennessee, twenty years old, and blind for three years. I offered to train a dog for him if he would come to Switzerland to be trained with it. By his real vision this boy is going to make it possible for other blind men to have their Seeing Eye.

"Declaration of Independence."

One afternoon towards the end of his training in Switzerland he was lying back in his chair resting. I thought he was asleep, when I heard him laugh. Then he said in his soft Southern voice, "Mrs. Eustis, I've kept a smile on my face for three years 'cause I had to, but now I can smile 'cause I want to. I'm free." That is what his dog had done for him. In speaking of her he always says, "My dog has signed my Declaration of Independence."

In the six months that he has had her in America she has gone everywhere alone. The night he landed, he walked up Broadway in the theatre crowds. I would like to read you a paragraph from his last letter to me.

"One year ago to-day, I read of Dorothy Harrison Eustis and her 'Seeing Eye,' and if I could have looked into the future would I or would I not have written that letter that was to change my life? Changed me from a blind and helpless human to one who can see again. I know what the dog means to me, and no matter what obstacle may arise, it will not keep me from seeing that every blind man has his opportunity to enjoy the freedom of motion. I have fulfilled every dream I dreamt in Switzerland, for there is nowhere that I cannot go alone. This work cannot be a failure."

The "Seeing Eye" School.

He is organizing a small school in Nashville, Tennessee, which will be called the "Seeing Eye." He plans to furnish the blind man with his dog at cost—between 150 and 200 dollars. As a dog can be counted on to work from eight to ten years, a man's independence will cost him only 15 to 20 dollars a year. Mr. Frank himself is in an insurance company, and is at the same time following his courses at

Vanderbilt University, has a scholarship for Harvard and another for Columbia, and is doing this only as his contribution to America's blind.

The school can only start on a very small scale on account of the lack of instructors. There are very few good ones, even in Germany. When Mr. Frank said that he wanted to start the work in America if I would help him with the training end of it, I didn't want to be behind him in courage, so I said "yes." My difficulty was that, not living in America, I couldn't take the responsibility of trainers sent over here unless I trained them myself. As I live half way up a mountain-side and the training of dogs to lead the blind must be done right through the city streets, I couldn't do the work on a big enough scale at home.

This problem has been solved for me through the interest of Captain Georges Balsiger of Lausanne, who has offered his house and grounds as training headquarters for Europe outside of Germany under the name of *L'Oeil qui Voit*, and also through the generosity of an American woman who by her financial support has made it possible to open a school for instructors in connection with the Lausanne School.

Guide, Philosopher and Friend.

In this way, all Seeing Eye instructors will be trained by the Fortunate Fields methods. They will be men who have been selected and vouched for by us and who will do their work not as dog trainers but with the aim of putting the blind man on equal terms with the seeing man, who will not exploit him, but who will earn their living by lifting the blind man's burden and widening the dog's already wide service to man—that of guide, philosopher and friend.

IN last month's BEACON, the Institution for the Blind, of which Dr. C. Strehl is Principal, was stated to be at Harburg, Lahn, Germany. This should be Marburg-Lahn, Germany.

THE following amusing couplet is recalled by a correspondent in the *Daily News*. It was published when Mr. Fawcett—the blind Postmaster-General—failed to secure re-election at Brighton:—

*Has't lost him, Brighton ! Quite unkind,
He sees too much, 'tis Brighton that is blind.*

GREATER LONDON FUND FOR THE BLIND.

THE weather was distinctly unfriendly towards the Fund in the early summer. The charming and gaily decorated gardens of Lyndhurst Square, Peckham, were deserted for the Halls wisely reserved in case of rain; and Miss Cowderoy is to be congratulated on the excellent financial result and great success of the event. Lady Fulton made a touching appeal at the opening ceremony. The Mayor and Mayoress of Camberwell and Mr. Franklin Agutter, Hon. Secretary of the Camberwell "Helpers of the Blind" were on the platform. The Mayor commended the Fund to the citizens of the Borough as worthy of their warm support, and expressed the hope that many present would respond to Miss Johnston's appeal and become "Helpers of the Blind" at once by giving their names to Miss Cowderoy, who is to be Captain of the Peckham area. The blind artistes gave a Concert in the evening, which was followed by a Dance, in which all the hardworking stallholders joined.

Rain, too, spoiled the Garden Party arranged by Mrs. Evan at her beautiful home at Sanderstead. The British Empire Shakespeare Society gave a fine performance of "As You Like It," when the sun came out again.

The same day was the second of the Balham Fête arranged jointly by the British Boy Scouts and the Fund, and the attendance was likewise badly affected. The opening ceremony was performed by Lady Cynthia Asquith, who was accompanied by her husband and their son Simon.

Garden Meeting at Hammersmith.

Then the weather changed, and the Mayoress of Hammersmith had a perfect summer afternoon for her Garden Meeting at the Vicarage, Hammersmith, lent by the Rev. H. M. M. Bevan. There was a little sadness over this gathering, as its primary object was to re-form the Circle of "Helpers of the Blind" led for so long by Madame Emily Nicholls, who died this year. Many representative Hammersmith folk accepted the Mayoress's invitation, and became "Helpers" in response to the appeal of Alderman Pascall, who deputised for her as speaker. The Vicar spoke approvingly of the work of the Fund. The Mayoress was elected Chairman of the re-formed Circle, Miss Bance, Hon. Secretary, and Mrs. Hesterman (Madame Nicholls' right hand) to act jointly

with her; Mrs. Bish was secured as Hon. Treasurer. Near the tea tables there was a display of goods made by the blind which attracted much attention.

A delightful entertainment was provided by Miss Phyllis Evenett and Mr. Kenneth Ellis, who both happen to be Hammersmith residents and are known to our readers as good friends to the blind, Miss Phyllis Mayson and Miss Pattie Price, assisted by Mr. Wilden Knight of the G.L.F. Party. As usual, the dancing items were very popular, and were carried out cleverly by the pupils of Miss Barclay.

Entertainment at Chelsea.

The weather was also favourable for the party in the old gardens of the Rectory, Chelsea, lent by the parents of the Vicar of Hammersmith, the Venerable the Archdeacon of Middlesex and the Hon. Mrs. Bevan. The famous mulberry tree, planted by Queen Elizabeth, provided a charming setting for some very effective dancing. The young artistes used its thick foliage to provide them with dressing rooms and "wings." They included pupils of Miss Flora Fairbairn and Miss Irene Mawer. Special features were a Mime Play, written by Miss Irene Mawer, a short ballet and solos composed by Mr. Rodney Eden, and special dances arranged and produced by Penelope Spencer. Miss Phyllis Fildes and Miss Myrtle Peter were principal dancers in the delightful ballet produced by Miss Fairbairn. The blind artistes had the generous assistance of Miss Eva Gordon and Mr. Harold Swinscow from the Brer Rabbits Concert Party. Helpers of the Blind from many districts gave their help to their fellow-members in Chelsea.

An interesting indoor event was Miss Pattie Price's Recital of old English Songs and Child Sketches. The Hon. Mrs. Ronald Greville lent her beautiful drawing room to Miss Price for the recital, which was greatly enjoyed; particularly the Child Sketches and A. E. Milne songs. In Mrs. Greville's absence through illness, Lady Fulton received the guests, and an eloquent appeal was made by Lady Muriel Paget.

Cricket and Sports Clubs gave their usual generous support to the Fund by inviting the G.L.F. Party to their grounds. Among the districts visited were Woodford Wells, Hendon (Messrs. Maple & Co.), Shepherds Bush, Enfield, Hornsey (North-Middlesex), Winchmore Hill and Honor Oak Park.

PERSONALIA

Retirement of Nuneaton's Blind Organist.

ORGANIST at Chilvers Coton Church, Nuneaton, the famous "Shepperton Church" of George Eliot's "Scenes of Clerical Life," Mr. Tom White, the organist, a blind musician and singer, is retiring after 34 years' service.

Mr. White was born in 1862, being blind from birth, and was given a start in life by the late Rev. G. R. Pennington, vicar of Chilvers Coton and chairman of the Nuneaton Guardians, who dropped dead in the pulpit during a sermon. Mr. Pennington got young Tom into the Birmingham School for the Blind when he was 10 years old, and he remained there from 1873 until 1880.

He gained a Gardner scholarship and was sent to the Normal College of Music for the Blind. He sang before Queen Victoria in the prize festivals of the college and also appeared on the platform with the late Madame Albani and Madame Patti.

Presentation to Blind Club Secretary.

To commemorate his many years association with the West Kensington Athletic Club, both as chairman and latterly as secretary, Mr. Tom Smith, who lost his sight when working on munitions during the War, was recently presented with a handsome silver Braille watch at a social and dance at the Albion Hotel, Hammersmith Road.

The presentation was made by Sir Kenyon Vaughan-Morgan, M.P., who said Mr. Smith had triumphed over the greatest of physical disabilities, and had set an example to youth. It had often been noted that to those who had lost the inestimable value of sight other graces were granted. In their friend, Mr. Smith, the truth of that saying was well exemplified. He had watched over the fortunes of the club for many years. His disability had demanded consistent and untiring courage, which they could not too highly esteem. Speaking with emotion, Mr. Smith returned thanks. He said

he felt somewhat like a barrister without his brief. He had had a long association with the club—since it was founded in 1911. The club was the pioneer of mid-week football in London. After lapsing during the war, the club was re-started, and he well remembered an interview with Sir Kenyon Vaughan-Morgan, at which the latter offered to present a cup for competition among the teams of the Western District Thursday League. The club had succeeded in winning the cup once, and last year were runners-up. "My work as secretary is a great joy and a hobby to me," concluded Mr. Smith.

BLIND BABY PRIZEWINNERS.

THE blind babies at the new "Sunshine Home" at Abbotskerswell, South Devon, are marching from success to success. They soon won all hearts in the district, and now they are already taking prizes at the local Cottage Garden Society Annual Show.

Nine of the babies sent in exhibits and nine of the babies captured prizes (two packets of chocolates each!) and six certificates. Varying in ages from 3½ years to 6½ years, they sent in bunches of wild flowers, and samples of modelling, needlework and handicraft.

Here is the certificate list:—

Bessie Seago (3½)	Bead-threading
Roy Wisbey (4)	" "
Arthur Hayes (5½)	Modelling "
Frank Baldwin (4½)	" "
Sidney Bryant (5)	Handwork
Edgar Thomson (4)	Needlework

They marched on to the platform for their prizes, behaving beautifully, but John Pike, when he reached the table, stood under it! They soon had him standing on top, however, and there he beamed with joy.

They were, of course, the success of the afternoon, everybody apparently agreeing with the Matron whose firm opinion is that

her "Sunshine" babies are "more clever and more beautiful than any other set of babies!" It is just possible, however, that the other "Sunshine" Matrons might disagree.



THE "SUNSHINE" BABIES WAITING FOR THEIR PRIZES

REVIEWS.

St. John's Guild Magazine.

THIS Magazine is now stereotyped, and can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, Miss D. Light, Applegarth, Rutland Road, Maidenhead, Berks., price 1s. per copy. It is published quarterly. The July number contains, letters from the Warden, the Secretary, and a native African teacher, and many articles and poems.

National Work for the Blind.

The National Institute has just issued a small illustrated booklet which describes concisely the exact nature and scope of the Institute's national work. A brief outline of the Institute's foundation is followed by facts and figures illustrating its growth.

The national work is divided into fifteen main sections: 1. Production of Embossed Publications, 2. Education, 3. Blind Babies' Homes, 4. Other Homes, 5. Apparatus, 6. Research, 7. Interests of Blind Musicians, 8. Wireless, 9. Relief, 10. Ex-Service Men's Fund, 11. Employment, 12. Home Industries, 13. Sales, 14. Propaganda, and 15. Information.

Finally, the Institute's co-operation with local work for the blind throughout the country is described, and a list is given of the agencies for the blind with which the National Institute and the National Library for the Blind have collecting agreements.

Copies of this comprehensive booklet will gladly be supplied gratis to all interested in the welfare of the blind.

APPLIANCES AND APPARATUS

Braille Alphabet in Rhyme.

WE have received the following interesting communication from a correspondent in Australia:

"A friend who is in a Rest Home asked me to teach her Braille. Instead of trying to write, she surprised me by putting into my hand the Braille alphabet turned into rhyme. Then she invented what she called a model for teaching Braille—six beads on wires, moved into place as the rhyme is repeated. It has been very favourably commented on in the various States here."

BRAILLE ALPHABET IN RHYME

By Racey Beaver.

1 • • 2
3 • • 4
5 • • 6

*Dot one, in Braille we say
Stands for the letter A,
Dot one and dot three
Make up the letter B.*

*Top dots one and two
Letter C gives to you,
Dots one to four must be
Said for the letter D.*

*E is dot one and four,
F, one two three, no more,
Soon known by you and me
One two three four, gives G.*

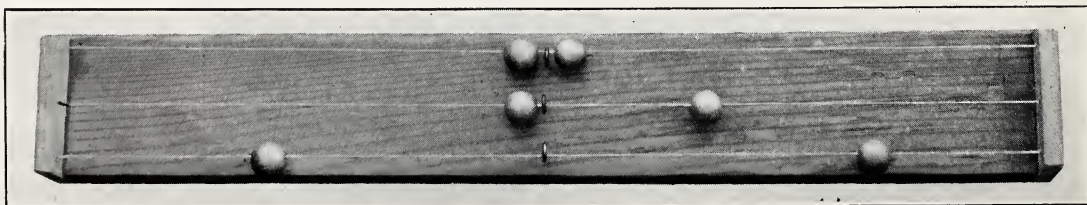
*H dot one three and four,
I three with two before,
Dots two three four is J,
Dot one five reveals K.*

*One three five stands for L,
M, one two five as well,
One two four five letter N,
O dot one four five again.*

*One two three five is P,
Q, one two three four five see,
Now find these symbols are
One three four five, making R.*

*Dots two three five gives S,
T two three four five H we guess,
Dots one five and six is U,
V one three five six the clue.*

*X one two five six we cry,
One two four five six is Y,
Z one four five six—and you
End—two three four six, W.*



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THE BLIND AND THE STATE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS REPORT

This interesting Review of a Report on the Welfare of the Blind in Various Countries, published by the League of Nations (Constable, 10s. 6d.) is reprinted, by permission of the Editor, from "The Times," September 24th.



BLINDNESS may or may not be a greater misfortune than deafness or the loss of some other sense. Opinions on that point vary according to degrees of sympathy and personal tastes: a musician would rather be blind than deaf, an artist rather deaf than blind. But, incontestably, blindness is the heaviest economic handicap which accident or disease has imposed on large numbers of human creatures. A deaf man may be unhappier than his blind fellow-citizen; but a blind man is more helpless. The deaf man conceivably may get less out of life; but the blind man is less likely to earn a living.

That is why the World of the Blind is so much a world apart. It is peopled by several million. In its enduring darkness bravery struggles unceasingly for self-support and self-expression, failing inevitably at times but creating a tradition of success starred with brilliant achievements. From St. Basil, whose home at Caesarea, in Cappodocia, was the mother-house of institutions for the blind, the line of philanthropy passes through St. Louis, whose Hospice des Quinze Vingts still exists in Paris to remind us that blinded ex-Service

men straggled home even from the Crusades, through Edward Rushton, who caught malignant ophthalmia while tending a cargo of negro slaves, down to Armitage, Campbell, and Pearson. On the foundations they laid has been built up a system of welfare and a technique of education and training which is of extraordinary interest. To-day the economic and intellectual output of the blind is by no means contemptible. Societies and agencies for the blind dispose of considerable revenues. The World of the Blind is, in fact, a large world full of real people busy with practical problems. Yet two things stand out as astonishing: the first, that politicians, publicists, and even social workers in general know singularly little of a problem which throughout civilization is falling more or less rapidly under the cognizance of the State; the second, that hitherto no comprehensive statement of the problem and of its treatment has been compiled for either the specially interested or the generally sympathetic public.

The Report issued by the League of Nations is the first such comprehensive account. Acting on a request made by the British Government in 1927, it sent out a set of questions to its constituent members. Twenty-six countries have furnished information, and

the Report takes the familiar form of a series of appendices preceded by a text which collates, summarizes, and comments on the facts. A version in French will follow. This first issue is in English, a compliment perhaps to the initiative taken by the British Government and even more to the authors of the text who, as the preface reveals, are two British Civil servants—Mr. F. R. Lovett, of the Ministry of Health, and Mr. G. Hawley, of the Department of Health for Scotland. They have not scrupled to add information in their own possession to the mass of contributed material. Nor have they hesitated on occasion to express their own point of view and to suggest standards by which present stages of development may be judged. Information on many points is still incomplete. But the Report, bulky but lucidly written and intelligently arranged, lays a firm basis of knowledge for that process of rationalization which the Blind World, caught in the same stream of tendencies as sighted industry, is just beginning to practise.

State Aid in Great Britain.

Blind welfare in this country has reached the first stage of development consequent upon the Blind Persons Act of 1920. By that Act the State accepted specific responsibility for the blind as such. The blind are the only category of handicapped citizens so recognized, and only in Great Britain and the United States is specific responsibility for them assumed by the State. Since 1920 developments have been rapid and far-reaching. Blindness has been defined—in slightly different terms, it is true, for educational and industrial purposes—but none the less defined. On those definitions a complete register of blind persons has been compiled; and on that register a comprehensive system of assistance, financial and other, has been built. The financial framework of the charities for the blind has been underpinned and reinforced by State and local government grants; an equilibrium of public assistance has been established which, if not yet perfect in balance, has made "nationalization of work for the blind" harder both to advocate and to effect.

Whatever defects may exist in the Act, it has been administered with a happy mixture of humanity and common sense. The structure of blind welfare in this country, built at random by private enterprise in philanthropy and local initiative, has been pulled together into a strong and coherent whole. In the light of

foreign experience it cannot yet stand as a model; it might still be more effective and more economical in its working; those who are extending and improving it have plenty still to learn. But no blind child need now go short of education, and no blind man or woman need now parade affliction in search for alms. Would that it could be said that no blind person need fret his soul in idleness if capable of employment! There is unemployment in the blind world as in the sighted.

Employment and Research.

In England, Wales, and Scotland there are just on 13,000 blind persons in employment or under training; nearly 1,800 are either "trained but unemployed," or "not trained but trainable." Into the problem thus summarily stated important research work is being carried on by the National Institute for the Blind and the National Institute of Industrial Psychology. Historically, workshops for the blind came into being as a result of the difficulty of finding employment for the blind persons whom schools had trained. The competition of the machine and of low-paid foreign labour is constantly increasing the difficulty of disposing of blind-made products, excellent though their workmanship may be. The need for new outlets is urgent, and the League of Nations Report is not least interesting in those sections which set out the occupations filled and the trades practised by the blind at home and abroad.

In America the blind have profited by the premium placed on all labour by the restriction of immigration; in Germany by disablement laws which insist on the employment of a certain percentage of disabled or handicapped persons; in other countries by special privileges, such as the preference given to them in Czecho-slovakia in granting licenses to sell tobacco. Their industrial problem in England has not been simplified in any such way; and the counterpart of "rationalization" in the English World of the Blind must clearly include not only the policy of unifying collections, which, to the benefit of the charitable public, and of the blind themselves, has already eliminated much overlapping and competition in the raising of funds, but co-operative thinking and combined action on the interconnected problems of education, vocational guidance, occupations, and marketing.

The 19th century was the age of institutional treatment for the minority. The 20th has made a promising beginning in systematizing the care of the majority outside the institutions. By reason of age and infirmities two out of every three English blind adults are unemployable. But all have to be supported and taught to master their environment, even if they cannot make a living from it. The League Report covers the whole of the subject of blind welfare from Braille music to the training of guide dogs. It is the first general survey of a world which owes its distinctiveness not to the sympathy which blindness excites, but to the proved ability of blind people to contribute to the economic and intellectual life of the nation.

* * *

We also reprint, by permission of the Editor, the following leader on the subject which appeared in the same issue of "The Times."

WELFARE OF THE BLIND

THE late Sir Arthur Pearson, when speaking of the work for blinded soldiers at St. Dunstan's, with which he was so closely identified, used to say that sympathy was the one thing of which he and his fellow-sufferers stood in no need. "Don't come here and pity us; come and help us to feel that we require no 'pity.'" That attitude, so courageous and so wise, has become characteristic of all the most effective work for the blind. To-day, as the Report on the Welfare of the Blind in Various Countries, which the League of Nations has just published, shows, the blind have their place in the world, won and held by service and established now in many lands by legislative enactment. The Report is reviewed in another column. It has, as is pointed out there, been issued in the first instance in the English language, a compliment, perhaps, to the initiative taken by the British Government over which Mr. Baldwin presided. The authors of the text are British Civil Servants, and they have set themselves to lay, securely, the basis of knowledge "for that process of rationalization which the Blind World, caught in the same stream of tendencies as sighted industry, is just beginning to practise."

Rationalization is necessary because the conditions of modern industry have imposed hardships on blind workers not greatly different from those against which workers in possession of their sight are now contending. The

competition of the machine and of low-paid foreign labour, for example, is constantly increasing the difficulty of disposing of "blind-made" products. In consequence, though in Great Britain 13,000 blind persons are at present in employment or undergoing training, nearly 2,000 are either "trained but unemployed" or "not trained but trainable." The National Institute for the Blind and the National Institute of Industrial Psychology are carrying out research work with the object of assisting the unemployed blind to obtain employment. That this effort may, in course of time, lead to further help from the Government is not improbable, for the blind have profited in America by the premium placed on all labour by the restriction of immigration, in Germany by disablement laws which insist on the employment of a percentage of disabled or handicapped persons, and in other countries by special privileges such as the preference given to them in Czecho-slovakia in the grant of licenses to sell tobacco. The authors of the Report suggest that in this country "co-operative thinking" is necessary if combined action is to be taken on the interconnected problems of education, vocational guidance, occupations and marketing. Much, therefore, remains to be done. It is satisfactory to realise that future effort can rely on a substantial basis of past achievement. By the Blind Persons Act of 1920 the State accepted specific responsibility for the blind as such. A complete register of blind persons has been compiled, and a comprehensive system of assistance, financial and other, has been built up. As our correspondent reminds us, "No blind child to-day in this country need go short of education, and no blind man or woman need now parade affliction in search of alms."

* * *

Below we give extracts from a letter on the same subject, from Captain Ian Fraser, C.B.E., which appeared in "The Times," September 26th.

PLEAS FOR A ROYAL COMMISSION

AS your well-informed Correspondent and leader writer show, there is much in which we can take pride in the conduct of many blind people and in the organisation of the educational training, and after-care facilities jointly provided and financed by the State, social authorities, and voluntary agencies. Nevertheless, there is an unhappily large number of blind men and women unemployed

or unemployable, and without the means for anything but the barest subsistence. The victims of the War are not among these. Military pensions have been stabilized, and it seems likely that a generous public will see that St. Dunstan's standard of auxiliary and additional special aid is maintained. But is it not time that the nation made a desperate effort to raise to a better level the economic position of the majority of our blind peoples?

"Some local authorities interpret the Blind Persons Act of 1920 generously; some do not. There are almost as many different scales of assistance as there are local authorities, and each has different rules. Almost every blind institution could employ more blind people and/or pay better wages to those at present employed, if official help was given by restrictions on imports and the purchase on the part of Government Departments and local authorities of the goods which those institutions produce and can sell only with the greatest difficulty.

"Many there are who think that the solution is to municipalize all the institutions. I do not exclude even this, if along with it was born a willingness on the part of the municipalities themselves to take for the public service at special prices the goods which the blind can make so well. Municipalization, however, can only be justified if it offers the prospect of more employment for the blind.

"Probably, too, the majority of local authorities are not ready to assume the burden of owning and operating municipal workshops, and possibly they could help most by further and more generous co-operation with existing philanthropic organisations than by taking them over. The blind will not be helped by the destruction of the voluntary system, but by the construction and enlargement of State and municipal efforts in co-operation with the voluntary system and along the trail which individual effort has blazed.

"There are anomalies in the laws and regulations relating to the special pensions which are paid to the blind. A blind man may receive 10s. a week at the age of 50 under the Blind Persons Act, 1920, an additional 10s. a week at the age of 65 under the Widows', Orphans', and Old Age Contributory Pensions Act of 1925, and having enjoyed the income of £1 a week for five years will revert at the age of 70, when his needs can scarcely be less,

to the original 10s. a week. Mr. Baldwin's Government committed themselves to an improvement in pensions for the blind by promising to pay them at the age of 40 instead of 50, which small concession earned our gratitude, and will at least, I hope, be implemented by the present Administration.

"There is, throughout the land, as the collections of the voluntary agencies show, an abundant and widespread sympathy, strong enough to support a big measure of additional help for our blind people through State and municipal channels. But there are conflicting views as to what is the next step to be taken. Has not the time come for a committee of inquiry, perhaps even a Royal Commission, to be set up to go fully into this matter?"



Scholarships for the Blind, December, 1929

The next Examination for Gardner Trust Scholarships of the annual value of £40, tenable at the Royal Normal College for the Blind, Upper Norwood, S.E.19, will be held on Saturday the 7th and Monday the 9th of December. Candidates must have reached the age of sixteen on or before the date of the Examination, must have resided in England or Wales for the last five years and be intending to remain so resident. Application should be made to the Principal on or before Saturday the 23rd November, and the Forms properly filled in and completed, returned to the College on or before Saturday the 30th November, or the Candidate's name will not be placed on the list.

A Wonderful Blessing.

The following letter appeared in a recent issue of the RADIO TIMES:—

"Being a blind man from birth, I should like to express to you my appreciation and gratitude for the B.B.C. programmes generally, especially the daily morning service. It has brought new interest and happiness into my life. Being blind, I have a lot of time on my hands, and might often be melancholy if that wonderful blessing of wireless had not been discovered, and with such a variety of programmes that completely take one out of oneself altogether—especially in my own case. Wireless has opened for me such inward light into new pleasures and delights that I am indeed a very grateful blind man."—F. W. STORKY, Thetford, Norfolk.

THE EIGHTH CONGRESS OF BLIND ESPERANTISTS

Held during the 21st International Esperanto Congress at Budapest, August 2nd to 9th, 1929.

By W. Percy Merrick



WE, my wife and I, joined two other Esperantist couples and went very comfortably to Budapest, stopping one night at Cologne, one at Nuremberg, where we met Mr. and Mrs. Thulin returning to Sweden from the Pre-Congress on the Blind held earlier in the month at Vienna, and three nights at Vienna, where a "pre" Esperanto congress was being held to open an Esperanto museum. We much enjoyed the afternoon of the first day there spent at Cobenzl, a hill just outside the city, where you stroll about or sit under the trees, take refreshments, chat to your friends, and get a beautiful view of Vienna spread out below. Here we met Miss Melchior, Mr. Halfmann, and other blind and seeing Esperantist friends, like ourselves halting on their way to Budapest.

Overflowing with Esperantists.

On August 1st Mr. Wilhelm Miklas, the president of the Austrian Republic, received Esperanto representatives in the Rathaus in the morning, and then proceeded to the State Museum, a former royal palace, to open the Esperanto section of the museum. The large and beautiful Library Hall was filled with Esperantists, many more than were expected, and younger people were asked to stand to make room for the older ones. Not liking to be thought old, we took the meeting afoot, and saw our seats occupied by two vigorous youngsters! The Austrian dignitaries expressed much graceful sentiment in German, which was translated for us, and our president, Mr. Merchant, and others, as gracefully thanked them for the honour done to Esperanto by their presence and by the establishment of this section of the museum under State direction. At Schönbrunn in the evening we met more friends, but not the supper for which we had bought coupons, the number of Esperantists present having overtaxed the resources of the restaurant! However, we ultimately escaped starvation at our hotel. This hotel, the Hammerand, has on its wall a tablet, affixed during the Vienna Congress in 1924, recording that once Dr.

Zamenhof, the inventor of Esperanto, had made a long stay there.

On August 2nd we went by train to Budapest. Most of the blind Esperantists had gone by steamer the day before, Dr. Bano having obtained from the company a free passage for them. Hitherto throughout our journey the country had looked green and flourishing, but the moment we left the Austrian border we entered a torrid zone, for on the plains of Hungary the sun seemed to have had it all his own way for months, and everything was dried up. The railway went over little patches of mud which the large bridges showed must sometimes be wide rivers. The corn was already cut and much of it cleared.

Delicious Sucking Pig.

On reaching Budapest we went in search of the Esperantists, who were said to be gathered somewhere in the Park, but this is so extensive that we walked miles without finding them. At last someone who spoke German told us where we could get an evening meal at a restaurant that was "elegant"—and so it was, with a fine band playing and seats under the trees. They brought us sucking pig, for which the place is renowned, and it certainly did justice to Charles Lamb's immortal description of the delicacy.

The opening meeting of the main Congress was on the Saturday evening, August 3rd. The speeches seemed to be much of the usual encouraging nature, and representatives of over forty countries greeted the Congress, showing how little difference there is in spoken Esperanto in all parts of the world. Owing to our preoccupation with our blind and other friends we did not attend the lectures of the summer university or the "business" meetings of the Congress.

A Procession One Thousand Strong.

The programme on Sunday was very full; the Protestant and Catholic services were unfortunately held before we were up, but we took part in the procession through the city along with about one thousand other Esperantists; in the afternoon we were photographed *en masse*, and in the evening there was the

Congress dance, made very interesting this year by the performance of old national dances by the Bulgarians, both tunes and dances being evident survivals from ancient rural life. At the theatre on Wednesday afternoon three little pieces were acted, the Esperanto poet, Julio Baghy, taking part in one of his own pieces. Perhaps sight is necessary to appreciate them fully, but I rather prefer the longer works given at previous congresses.

On Wednesday evening the blind Congressists gave a very fine concert at the Music Academy, which was broadcast from the Budapest Radio Station. Specially memorable were the loving renderings of Bach by Mr. Dick Schipper, a young Dutch pianist whom we met several times, and whose charming personality delighted all who met him. Mr. Toman, of Bohemia, again delighted us with his masterly playing of Smetana and other modern composers; Miss Riedel sang operatic solos, and Mr. Baghy, the only seeing performer, gave us a fine recitation of one of his own poems. It was encouraging to find the concert so well attended by seeing Esperantists.

The Blind Congress.

The Eighth Blind Congress consisted of 114 members, 78 being blind and the rest guides or teachers of the blind. They came from thirteen countries, Austria, Bulgaria, Czecho-Slovakia, Denmark, England, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Jugo-Slavia, The Netherlands, Poland and Sweden. Most of them were hospitably put up at the State Blind Institution, taking their meals at a good and cheap restaurant nearby. The Institution is a fine building standing in a large garden in a pleasant part of the town not far from the Park. It has a nice concert room, always at our disposal, many class rooms, dining rooms, dormitories (which I did not see), a gymnasium, a museum, a Braille library and a small Braille printing press. There were miles of corridors in which both blind and seeing people were always getting lost. The staff and pupils were away for their holidays, but the director, Mr. Karl Herodek, was present at some of our meetings and very kindly showed us over the Institution on the last day.

At our opening meeting on August 3rd, many seeing Esperantists, including Dr. Felix Zamenhof, brother of the inventor of Esperanto, were present. Dr. Miklos Bano,

the most remarkable blind man in Hungary, was Chairman, and his skill in remembering long Hungarian speeches and translating them into Esperanto almost took one's breath away. It was to his work for more than six months that we owed the many concessions and arrangements which made the blind congress possible. Several other meetings were held, but the intolerable heat made it almost impossible for anyone to give the matters under discussion the attention they deserved.

Social Side of the Congress.

Though the actual business done was not very decisive, the social intercourse between so many blind Esperantists, the friendships begun or renewed, the little talks between cosmopolitan groups in the Institution garden or in the arbours of the restaurant will make the Congress live in the memories of the participants. Often these conversations were not mere chatter, though merriment was evident, but were suggestive of new enterprises which may mature with thought and correspondence. What strikes one most on mixing thus intimately with the blind of other countries is the great difficulty which so many of them have in keeping the wolf from the door, and how keen they are to seize every opportunity of gaining knowledge that may help them and their fellow-countrymen to better their condition. In many places voluntary or State help for the blind is woefully insufficient; it is these men and women that we meet at the congresses who are striving to make good and to show their public not only the needs, but the capabilities of the sightless.

The Editor of "Esperanta Ligilo."

For the first time since the Esperanto Congress in Cambridge in 1907, Mr. Thilander, the editor of *Esperanta Ligilo*, was present. His deafness prevented him from taking part in the discussions, but he spoke at one of our meetings in clear and fluent Esperanto and received a great ovation. For over twenty-five years he has worked to diffuse useful knowledge among the blind by the Universal Language, encouraging, guiding and helping his many friends throughout the world to achieve things they would never have attempted by themselves.

Many of the blind members returned to Vienna and even further up the Danube by boat, and much enjoyed the refreshing coolness

of the river air after the heat of the town. We ourselves left many of the sights unseen, for there is much of interest in Budapest, and the Hungarian courtesy is always at hand to make sight-seeing a real pleasure. Among our pleasantest experiences were two little tea parties, one given by Dr. and Mrs. Bano in their little flat in the centre of the town, a delightful glimpse into the ordinary life of the place; and the other at our hotel, where

Mr. and Mrs. Thilander gathered round them a few of their oldest friends, and revived many memories.

It has not yet been decided where the Esperanto Congress will be held next year. Oxford is one of the places under consideration, and should it be chosen, we can only hope that the hospitality proffered to the foreign guests will be as warm as that which we received in Hungary.



REPORTS FROM THE INSTITUTIONS

Northern Counties Association for the Blind.

THE membership of this Association now comprises 48 Voluntary Societies and 22 Local Authorities, seven County Boroughs having been added to the membership during the last financial year.

The number of blind persons on the Association's Register at March 31st, 1929, was 16,134. During the year, 2,399 new cases were reported. There are 258 cases on the observation register. The following figures are of interest:—

Employed—Workshops ..	1,258
Home Workers ..	334
Elsewhere ..	1,210
Trained but Unemployed ..	122
Under Training ..	743
Trainable ..	272
Unemployable ..	11,307

Eastern Counties Association for the Blind.

Progress in many directions is reported, a salient fact being the rapid decrease of blindness amongst infants and young children owing to improved health services and progress in scientific research. Railway concessions have been granted to the civilian blind, in addition to blind ex-service men, from 1st January, 1929. Considerable progress has been made with the unification of collections. The total blind population in the area covered by the Association is 2,906.

Employed—Workshops ..	44
Home Workers ..	140
Elsewhere ..	211
Trained but Unemployed ..	44
Under Training ..	76
Trainable ..	36
Unemployable ..	2,127

Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind

During the year the Royal Institution had the great misfortune to lose Mr. R. G. Cowley, who died in February. To perpetuate his memory, the recently established Home is known as the Cowley Home for Blind Women. The Eighty-Second Report of this Institution is before us, and it states that the Minister of Health has expressed warm appreciation of the general progress made in providing for the welfare of a large number of blind persons. The social welfare of unemployable blind is an increasingly important branch of the work. The Institution manages a Home Workers' Scheme, 128 home workers being registered.

College of Teachers of the Blind.

The membership of the College has increased from 366 in 1928 to 389 in 1929. In the School Teachers' Examination, 1928, eleven candidates entered and eight gained the diploma. In the Home Teachers' Examination, 1928, 118 candidates entered and 72 certificates were granted. In this examination, generally speaking, the work showed decided improvement, although the Report states that "there was still a number of candidates who showed a lamentable ignorance of what was required of them," particularly in Braille. The first Craft Teachers' Examination will be held this month, covering trades usually taught to blind persons; and the first Examination of Pianoforte Tuners will be held in December next.

The Northern Branch of the College has a membership of 160; the Midland Branch, 72; and the Southern Branch, 134.

Thanks are expressed to the National Institute, and Gardner's Trust for the Blind, for financial and other assistance.

London Association for the Blind.

This interesting report contains one striking statement which all interested in the welfare of the blind should constantly bear in mind: "The greater the output of work made by the blind, the greater the demand for financial help to buoy up the intensification of the business." The Association rightly stresses the necessity for constant progress and development, and does not admit such words as "curtailment" or "reduction." A very interesting chart shows that trade has progressed from £4,322 in value in 1917 to £26,532 during the last year; and wages (including special benefits to the blind but excluding augmentation) from £2,848 in 1917 to £19,142 last year. Many of the knitting machines used by the Association are becoming worn out, and others will have to be bought. For this purpose, funds are urgently needed.

Hants and Isle of Wight School and Home for the Blind.

38 boys and 15 girls are boarders, and 5 boys and 6 girls are day pupils at this School. In order to meet expenses, fees of boarders have had to be raised by £3 10s. per annum. Chair-caning and basket-making are taught as part of the education of the children.

Keighley and District Institution for the Blind.

There are 162 blind or partially blind persons on the register of this Society, ranging from eight to eighty-five years of age. Most of its work is concerned with the welfare of "unemployables." Most of the collecting in the area is made, under agreement, by the National Institute, and thanks are given to Mr. Coghill (Secretary of the Institute's Branch office at Leeds) and Captain Davis. The Report adds: "The material assistance we are able to give to our needy blind would have to be considerably reduced, were it not for their energy and patience."

Kesteven Blind Society.

An increase both in the assistance given to the blind and in the support received from the public is reported. A valuable feature of the Annual Report, which might well be adopted by other Societies, is the inclusion of a list of names and addresses of blind home workers in the district, recommended by the Society as good workers, to whom orders for baskets, mats, etc., can be given.

South Wales and Monmouthshire Counties Association for the Blind.

Two well-displayed notices in this Report which at once attract the attention of the reader are: "Does a Blind Tuner get your Piano-tuning Contract?" and "Do you ever engage a Masseur?" This is an excellent idea, and could be copied by other Reports, and supplemented by "Are your Baskets, Brushes, Mats, etc., wearing out?" "Do you need a Typist?" "Do you ever require first-rate woven materials?" etc. We feel sure that general advertisement of this kind will enormously assist the regular employment of the blind throughout the country.

Progress is reported slow but sure. The Association is taking every opportunity of spreading knowledge to assist the prevention of blindness, and a great deal of attention has been given to the unification of collections. "It is earnestly hoped," says the Report, "that before long the proposed agreement with the National Institute will be an accomplished fact."

The Report states "we do not think there is one blind person (in the area) at the moment for whom training is required whose case is not receiving attention. Unfortunately," it adds, "some of those considered trainable are not willing to accept the offer made them."

The total blind population in the area is 3,685. Of these there are:—

Employed—Workshops	..	261
Home Workers	..	20
Elsewhere	..	232
Trained but Unemployed	..	12
Under Training	.. ..	61
Trainable	.. ..	28
Unemployable	.. ..	2,910

Liverpool Workshops and Home-Teaching Society for the Out-Door Blind.

A useful feature of this Report is that the assistance given to the blind during the year, amounting in value to £31,702, is summarized on the front cover and at once catches the eye of the reader. Wages and augmentations paid to the blind have increased since 1912 from £5,330 to £17,554 and sales from £22,155 to £41,037. The number of blind employed is 177. The Society has a collecting agreement with the National Institute. Thirteen teachers are employed by the Home-Teaching Society. The sum of £11,336 has been paid out in weekly relief grants. The women in the Ash Lea Home have made 2,278 garments during the year for the Police Aided Society.

Leeds Incorporated Institution for the Blind and the Deaf and Dumb.

The work of the Trading Departments, expressed in figures, during 1928-9 was £17,718, an increase of over £1,000 from that of the previous year. Gymnastic classes for blind men were held during the winter months. The number of home teachers has been increased, and over 12,000 visits were paid during the year. The social side of the work is being rapidly developed. The Deaf and Dumb Department is worked on different lines from the Blind Department, as nothing is done by the State or the City Council for the deaf and dumb after the age of 16 years. Help takes the form of visits, assistance to employment, temporary relief, provision of recreations, and general welfare.

South Devon and Cornwall Institution for the Instruction and Employment of the Blind, Plymouth.

An interesting feature of this Society's Annual Report is a list of the Society's Presidents since 1861, amongst whom we note such well-known names as Lord Morley, Lord Mount-Edgumbe, Lord Robartes, Lord Revelstoke, Sir Edward Clarke, Q.C., the Duke of Edinburgh, Lord St. Levan, the Hon. Ivor Guest, Waldorf Astor, A. Shirley Benn—a list to be proud of. Blind workers have been kept fully employed during the year, a contract

of 1,100 shell baskets having been carried out with entire satisfaction. The National Institute is the only body collecting on behalf of the Society. It is of interest to note that the employment of a sighted traveller has proved a success, sales for the past year showing an increase of £772.

School for the Indigent Blind, Liverpool.

This Institution is (that of Paris excepted) the oldest School for the Blind in the world, says the Report. It has a Branch for Blind Children at Wavertree. Satisfactory progress in both schools is recorded. Boy Scouts and Girl Guides are attached to the School. The Chapel buildings are to be demolished, and new premises to be erected to suit present requirements, including a spacious shop with a street front. An Old Pupils' Fund has made grants during the year to over 100 old pupils. There are 57 men and 43 women at Hardman Street and 55 boys and 37 girls at Wavertree.

Norwich Institution for the Blind.

During the past year the affairs of the Institution have been most satisfactory. Sales show a decrease of over £100 but this is due to the general depression in trade. The total number of blind on the Society's Register is 70. Baskets, mats, machine-knitted socks and stockings, and plain and fancy hand-knitted articles are made.

EMBOSSSED MAPS.

THE series of embossed maps which the National Institute for the Blind is now producing are necessities in any school for the blind, and should prove very useful to blind individuals. The latest and best maps of the two Hemispheres, the Continents and the various Countries have been procured, and on these the necessary embossing has been made. Accordingly, each



EMBOSSSED PHYSICAL MAP OF EUROPE

map can be read by both sighted and blind alike.

Each Continent or Country has two maps—one showing mountains and rivers the other rivers and towns—and is accompanied by a specially written Guide in Braille. This Guide starts the blind reader's finger at a certain point in the map, and then traces round the coast, follows each river and its tributaries to their sources, and notes the chief towns

INTERNATIONAL NOTES

Book League of America Employs Blind Agents.

A PLAN for the employment of blind agents and salesmen was presented by The Book League of America at the Thirtieth Biennial Convention of the American Association of Workers for the Blind. The plan establishes commissions and bonuses for obtaining members to The Book League, which publishes an outstanding new book each month, and also offers to its membership the choice of twelve books of established reputation from a list of more than 120, including 43 books for children.

The scheme has been approved by the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Louisiana School for the Blind, Michigan Employment Institute for the Blind, Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind, and others.

Blind representatives have already been established in New York, Brooklyn, Castile, Binghamton, St. Louis, Baton Rouge and Somerville.

Mr. Morris Cohen, a student at Columbia University, will have been the first blind agent to become eligible for the monthly bonus to sales representatives, winning the bonus on the same terms as the sighted representatives to the Book League.

Vocational Notes from U.S.A.

A Brooklyn man who lost his sight after 40 is doing well as salesman for a wholesale dealer in eggs. He works on a commission basis and solicits from hospitals as well as from homes.

* * *

A young woman of 28, totally blind since childhood, has been appointed to the staff of a girls' reform school in one of the Southern States. She teaches piano, voice, and expression to the girls and being well liked by her pupils has no trouble with discipline.

U.S.A. Employers Write to Helen Keller.

Last Spring Miss Helen Keller, on behalf of the American Foundation for the Blind, Inc., wrote to a selected list of industrial employers, appealing to them to open their factories to sightless workers and enclosing a folder which listed some factory jobs the blind can do. Those who responded were referred

to the local organisations for the blind. The employers' replies showed that they had given serious thought to the question and were willing to help if possible. Here are excerpts from some of their letters:—

"For some time we have been considering establishing a special department for employees of long service who are physically disabled in one way or another. If we find it possible to do this we may also be able to extend opportunity to handicapped individuals not now in our employ." (Manufacturer of metal specialities.)

"I cannot see why positions for the blind should be any different from those for any other person. We always have to consider the handicaps of all employees, for none of them are perfect. . . . I think that a fair study will show that the real difficulty in securing suitable employment for the blind is the same as that in securing employment for other handicapped people, the mentally and morally weak, defects that we find much more frequently than physical defects. The trouble is shortage of foremen and managers." (Electrical manufacturer.)

"Our business is that of preparing medicinal products for physicians' prescriptions and I doubt if there is any work in the industry which can be adapted to those without sight. I shall be glad, however, to have Mr. ——— make a survey of our industry and if he can find any of our works are suitable to those under his direction who are seeking employment, I will be glad to render what assistance I can." (Manufacturing pharmacists.)

Blind Orphans in Syria.

The Ghazir Orphanage Blind School in Syria has for many years been carrying on very useful work in face of great difficulties. The majority of the cases dealt with have a sad story to tell—most of the orphans being Armenians and victims of the cruelties inflicted on that long-suffering country by the Turks during the War.

There is naturally a School at the Orphanage, where the children learn to read and write Braille in their mother-tongue. There is Arabic conversation, and some learn English. All the books for the School and Library have to be hand-written. Music is taught; there

is a mixed choir and an orchestra of 20 violins. The blind are all very anxious to learn a trade, and while the numbers in the School are diminishing, the industrial work is growing. There are 85 blind people working in the shops. Basket and mat making, hand-weaving and wicker furniture-making are taught. A difficulty is that all raw materials except reeds and wool have to be purchased from Europe. The Orphanage urgently needs financial help.

South African Library, Grahamstown.

This Library now owns 2,546 embossed books. There is a great need for Afrikaans Braille books, and the primary requisite is the Braille Primer in Afrikaans. The Braille Missionary Union in England is attempting the first fifty Psalms. A resolution at a recent National Council was "That Library Service for the blind be organized from the South African Library for the Blind at Grahamstown as the Central Library, and all books for the blind be housed there." The Library has one stereotyping machine, and about 21 Braille transcribers.

A Well-launched South African School.

From May, 1927, to December, 1928, the Athlone Blind School for Non-European Children, South Africa, has grown from a 7-roomed home and 5 acres of land with 6 pupils to a commodious school and 60 acres of land with 17 pupils. The children are drawn from all parts of the Union, and receive elementary and trade instruction. A satisfactory report was made by the Inspector of the Union Education Department in February. Afrikaans is taught orally, but books in Afrikaans are still awaited.

Free Railway Carriage of Braille Books in Victoria.

One hundred and forty-two voluntary transcribers are tirelessly at work enriching the Free Lending Library for the Blind, South Yarra, Victoria, Australia, with new literature. During the year, 13,557 books were loaned to readers, besides hundreds of Braille magazines and periodicals. Books are sent all over the State of Victoria (which has a blind population of 1,200), and are carried by the railways free of charge.

The Victorian Association of Braille Writers, who are responsible for the Library, also maintain a Seaside Holiday Home, and provide home teaching.

TRAINING OF BLIND PIANOFORTE TUNERS.

CIRCULAR 1403 issued by the Medical Branch, Board of Education, deals with the Training of Blind Pianoforte Tuners.

The Board and the Ministry of Health have had the matter under consideration, and find that there are, in this country, a number of insufficiently trained blind tuners whose earnings are very low.

This state of things, continues the Circular, appears to be due to three causes:—

- (a) insufficient care in the selection of men for a course of training in piano-tuning;
- (b) want of care in choosing suitable localities for the tuners to work in after training;
- (c) inadequacy of the training itself.

When every care has been taken to ensure that a man is suitable for training and that his prospects after training are reasonably satisfactory, it will be ineffectual unless the course of training which he is to enter is such as to ensure that he will reach a proper standard of efficiency. The raising of the standard, it is considered, will serve the best interests of the blind tuners themselves since, if incompetent blind tuners are allowed to practise, public opinion must inevitably turn against blind piano-tuners as a body.

In these circumstances the Board and the Ministry, after consultation with the College of Teachers of the Blind, have decided to require that all blind piano-tuners undergoing a course of training in institutions recognised by the Board should reach an adequate standard of attainment and efficiency as tested by a national examination conducted by the College of Teachers. It has also been decided to establish an honours examination.

It is proposed that the passing of the examination shall be required of all men undergoing a course of training in piano-tuning in recognised institutions who began their training after 1st July, 1927.

The Circular points out that, in these circumstances, it is undesirable that any blind piano-tuner who has not passed this examination should be approved in future as a Home-Worker.

The Board stresses the importance of maintaining a high standard in admitting persons to this particular form of training.

The regulations and syllabus for the examination, drawn up by the College of Teachers of the Blind in consultation with the Board, are set out in the Appendix to the Circular.

POST GUIDING FOR THE BLIND

The following extracts from an article contributed by Miss Jean Robinson to "The Guider" form a fitting conclusion to our recent articles on Blind Boy Scouts and Girl Guides. Miss Robinson is herself a blind Guider, and has done much to promote the Girl Guides' Movement amongst the blind and Holiday Camps for blind children. The National Institute, in its current Annual Report, acknowledges its indebtedness to Miss Robinson in connection with the latter movement.

"GUIDING offers many opportunities of solving some of the problems of blindness. Sight is important, but hearing, touch and smell can be trained to fill up the gap to a small extent, and we have in woodcraft, drill and badge work an excellent stimulus.

More important even than this training is the sense of comradeship, a live and vivid interest in what others are doing and thinking. Here Guiding can help enormously, for we can, and should, take part as far as possible in normal Guide activities, helping as well as being helped. This spirit of friendly cheerfulness is at its best in camp, where blind and seeing pull together for a fortnight each year. In the light of this comradeship blind and seeing alike regard the handicap as one of the ordinary troubles of ordinary human beings. The blind may find in it a means of understanding other people's problems, and if they attempt to do this they will, I think, find that in spite of constant set-backs the battle is more than half won.

Part of a World-Wide Family

We thus find Guiding is one of the big forces that make for a normal outlook among us who cannot see, making us feel part of a great family, stretching over most of the known world.

Our people are mostly not the alert and brisk blind, who can go to work in institutions. They are sometimes delicate, sometimes very deaf, and sometimes a little slow mentally. We cannot meet often, so we follow the ordinary procedure of a Post Guide company, work on the patrol system and have a Court of Honour either by writing or by meeting face to face—and what a chattering there is if such a meeting can be arranged! There is no shyness nor diffidence, but careful thinking out and wise planning on the part of the Rangers.

One copy of the letter goes round to each patrol, and in it are letters from the captain, the lieutenant, articles on Guiding, diagrams,

knots and slings, also articles on nature, foreign countries, etc., and competitions. Occasionally, too, some companies are able to arrange meetings of most of the people who are able to travel, and we are starting patrol meetings.

Where possible we ask District Commissioners to get our Rangers attached to local companies, and it is difficult to express how great is the benefit they derive from this. One person seen in the flesh is worth three letters.

The Post Guide Camp

The great event of the year for us is the Post Guide Camp. To it come the most able of our delicate folk from all over England. To these Rangers camping for the first time is a fearful joy and we get worried little letters beforehand. 'Captain, how shall I manage, I shan't be able to cut up my food.' 'How shall I manage to get about? I am rather shy and nervous, I do hope I shall get on all right.' 'I am not very quick at learning things.' Careful preparations, however, insure the smooth running of the camp. Its health is safely in the hands of the camp doctor, and special attention is paid to food.

We have received much help from the County Associations for the Blind, and co-operate with all societies working for the blind. Our object is to have in every county, or group of counties, a responsible lieutenant, who when the time comes will become a captain; secondly, a body of keen and alert Rangers, preferably those blind who go to work—people who can bring fresh life to the third element, the slower or delicate Rangers who must always form the majority of our companies, and whose pluck and cheerfulness call for the constant admiration of those who are stronger.

We want those who know, or who are willing to learn Braille, to come forward, and we want those who are willing to visit our people to help us with this most important part of our work. Letters are good, but



visiting much better. They will find their trouble amply repaid in the happiness they bring to the Rangers. One Ranger, blind and very deaf, and delicate, says she is stronger in every way since she joined us, and her mother bears out her statement. 'Your happy and affectionate Ranger' is a typical ending to her letters. Another, also blind and partly deaf, says that those round her tell her that Guiding has made a great difference to her. She is happier and less difficult to get on with. She has been company leader and did very well. One girl from another company writes: 'You cannot think what a joy it is to get letters which I can read myself. For two years after leaving the Blind School I have only had ones which had to be read to me. Through the Rangers I have got into touch with my blind friends again.' Another girl who lost her sight fairly recently and who was too delicate to go to a school to be trained, had not even been taught Braille when we discovered her. Her mother was blind, too, and the rest of her family at work, so they could not take her out. After some time and much writing we got a home teacher to teach her Braille and also got her adopted by the local Guides. She told her home teacher that life had not been worth living before she became a Post Ranger but now she had something to live for."



OBITUARY

Mr. Thomas William Holmes

IT is with very deep regret that we have to announce the death, on September 8th, after a long illness, of Mr. T. W. Holmes. In the August issue of THE BEACON we gave an account of Mr. Holmes' career, and his invaluable work as "The Blind Man's Artist." We little thought, then, that death would so quickly rob the blind of a devoted friend who spent so many years in attempting to fight the handicap of blindness. His many friends at the National Institute for the Blind feel very deeply the loss of a lovable personality.

But although an artist dies, his work remains, and enjoys the immortality of creative labour. The blind of a future generation will still have to teach them the many diagrams, maps, illustrations and devices so ably and patiently prepared by the hands whose active work is now ended. Mr. Holmes has left an undying light behind him, and than that, life can yield no greater fruit.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

Blind Solicitor for the Defence.

MR. HILTON GRIFFITHS, of Pontardulais, a blind Solicitor, appeared for the defence recently in a case at the Swansea County Police Court. Mr. Griffiths lost his sight while on active service during the War. A girl clerk led him into court, and his notes were in Braille.

Blind Lecturer at World Conference.

"It is comparatively easy when listening to a man with the gift of the gab to be deceived into thinking that he is speaking wisdom when it is only an inferior variety of gas. A tired working man or woman would not be willing to listen to one whom they regard as a remote Olympian."

These remarks were made by Mr. C. M. MacInnes, lecturer in history at Bristol University, at the World Conference on Adult Education at Cambridge.

Mr. MacInnes, who is blind and used Braille notes, spoke, says *The Western Daily Press*, with great fluency, chiefly on the tutorial question.

He declared that the tutorial teacher should resist the temptation to become a spell-binder.

Mr. MacInnes also spoke of the diversity of people who attend these tutorial gatherings and instanced a case in which one of the members was an agricultural labourer and the other an Indian tobacco planter.

Mr. MacInnes's address aroused much enthusiasm, and he was loudly cheered upon concluding.

Successful Blind Music Teacher.

Mr. H. Pinkus, a blind proof-reader in the Music (Stereo) Department of the National Institute, fills up a little of his spare time in the evenings by teaching the piano. One of his pupils, a sighted girl, aged ten, has just won a Scholarship, tenable for two years at the Royal College of Music. The child attends a L.C.C. School, and, after severe competition, she has secured one of the 15 Scholarships which were available for the whole of the London Schools.

We congratulate Mr. Pinkus on this noteworthy proof that the blind music teacher can hold his own in competition with sighted music teachers.

WORKERS FOR THE BLIND

NEW MEMBERS OF NATIONAL INSTITUTE COUNCIL



THE following gentlemen have recently been appointed Members of the Executive Council of the National Institute for the Blind:—Mr. J. J. Burton, J.P., F.G.S., Mr. B. J. Evans, Captain Ian Fraser, C.B.E., Mr. R. B. Hughes-Buller, C.B.E., the Rt. Hon. C. A. McCurdy, P.C., K.C., Mr. Ernest Whitfield, Ph.D., and Mr. J. W. Wootton.

Mr. J. J. Burton, J.P., F.G.S.

An account of Mr. Burton's career appeared in *THE BEACON*, October, 1928. He has taken great interest in the blind for the past 30 years, and it was almost entirely to his untiring work that the Cleveland and South Durham Institute for the Blind was opened in 1926. He supplied much data for the voluminous report issued in 1917 which led to the Blind Persons Act, 1920. He is an old member of the Northern Counties Association and a member of the Advisory Committee on the Welfare of the Blind of the Ministry of Health. He is a Member of many societies connected with science, art and literature, and holds important posts in connection with the Iron and Steel Trade.

Mr. B. J. Evans

For the past twelve years, Mr. B. J. Evans has been Chief Clerk to the County Medical Officer of Health for Pembrokeshire and Inspector and Petitioning Officer under the Mental Deficiency Acts for the same County. He has been of great assistance to the Pembrokeshire Blind Society for a number of years. He has visited all the 200 blind persons through a rural and scattered county, and continually supplies the Committee with information hardly possible to secure without his help. He is a co-opted member of the South Wales and Monmouthshire Counties Association for the Blind, of which he was Chairman three years ago.

Captain Ian Fraser, C.B.E.

Captain Fraser is known to most of our readers as the "Blind M.P."—although at the moment he is no longer a member of Parliament. But whether he is "out" or "in," this name, we feel sure, will stick to him, as he was a very popular and distinguished member of the House. His brilliant career was

described in *THE BEACON*, May, 1925. Since he was 17 he has been a "fighter." He was blinded in France on active service in 1916. He was a close friend of Sir Arthur Pearson, and succeeded him as Chairman of St. Dunstan's. He has done work of immense value for blinded soldiers, but his political career has been of equal interest and value. He has shown that a blind man, equipped with courage and perseverance, can equal the achievements of a man with sight, and that the loss of sight does not necessarily entail the loss of a future.

Mr. R. B. Hughes-Buller, C.B.E., C.I.E.

Mr. Hughes-Buller has had a distinguished career in the Indian Civil Service. He was Inspector-General of Police in Eastern Bengal and Assam, and later in Bengal, and in 1913 he was Offg. Director of Criminal Intelligence in India. In 1916-17 he did special duty at New Scotland Yard, and in the next year was Director of National Service in the South-Western Region. He is greatly interested in the welfare of the blind, and has rendered most valuable service to the London Association for the Blind.

Rt. Hon. C. A. McCurdy, P.C., K.C.

In the political and in the newspaper world, Mr. McCurdy is a well-known and distinguished figure. He was Liberal M.P. for Northampton from 1910 to 1923, being Parliamentary Secretary for the Ministry of Food in 1919-20, Food Controller in 1920-21, Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury, Coalition Liberal Chief Whip in 1921-22. He was one of the founders of the League of Nations Union, and was Chairman and Managing Director of the United Newspapers (1918) Ltd. His exceptional experience in propaganda work of all kinds will be of very great value to the blind generally.

Mr. Ernest Whitfield, Ph.D.

Dr. Ernest Whitfield is one of those blind men who, as scholar, musician or travelled man of affairs, never give one the least impression that they are blind. Readers of *THE BEACON* for September, 1928, which contained an account of his life, will remember that his outstanding characteristic is a belief in himself, which leads to complete independence from others. His musical career has been most

distinguished, but no less so has been his academic career. He himself has proved that a blind man's best assistance is that provided by his own character and energy; and his help in developing the characters of his blind fellows should prove invaluable.

Mr. J. W. Wootton

Mr. Wootton is an outstanding type of the business man who, retiring after a successful business career, brings his experience and capabilities to the help of the handicapped. Behind him, he has forty years' service with the Sun Life Assurance Society (London), and that experience has proved an asset to many philanthropic institutions. At present, beside holding the position of Hon. Financial Secretary to the Yorkshire Council of the British Empire Cancer Campaign, he is on the following local Committees:—Leeds Incorporated Institution for the Blind, Deaf and Dumb; Blind Persons Act Sub-Committee; Yorkshire Committee of the National Institute; and Leeds Poor Children's Holiday Camp Association.



REVIEWS

Directory of Braille Periodicals.

WE have just received a most interesting and useful compilation of Braille periodicals (and of ink-print magazines relative to the blind) published throughout the world. It has been compiled by Ida Hirst-Gifford and Ruth E. Wilcox, and is issued by the Bureau of Research and Education, American Foundation for the Blind, 125 East 46th Street, New York, U.S.A. It is stated that the list is fairly complete so far as the English, French and German languages, but that the list of periodicals in other languages may be incomplete because of inadequate information.

We congratulate the compilers on their excellent achievement, as in spite of their modest claim, it appears to us that the list is in most cases practically complete. Notable omissions, however, are Spanish, Portuguese and Russian. Also, amongst the English periodicals listed there are only one or two named as published in parts of the British Empire other than Great Britain.

From the table of contents we learn that the numbers of periodicals in each language are as follows:—

Chinese	Braille..	..	1
English	Braille Grade 1½	..	26
	Braille Grade II	..	25
	Moon ..	..	4
	New York Point	..	7
	Ink-print	..	20
Esperanto	Braille..	..	2
Finnish	Braille..	..	1
	Ink-print	..	1
French	Braille..	..	13
	Ink-print	..	3
German	Braille..	..	28
	Ink-print	..	10
Italian	Braille..	..	3
Japanese	Braille and Ink-print	..	1
Mexican	Ink-print	..	1
Norwegian	Braille..	..	2
	Ink-print	..	1
Polish	Braille..	..	1
Roumanian	Braille..	..	1
Yugo-Slavic	Braille..	..	1

Total Number of Braille Periodicals	..	112
Total Number of Moon Periodicals	..	4
Total Number of Ink-print Periodicals..	..	37

These figures are promising, for the future, but the present number of embossed periodicals is certainly inadequate for the blind population of the world, which amounts to millions.

It should be remembered, however, that there are very many thousands of blind amongst backward countries and states where reading amongst the sighted is almost unknown. It would be interesting to know the circulation of these periodicals. Probably it is comparatively very small, as we do not believe that the majority of the blind even in civilized countries yet read Braille with facility. But considering that Braille as an active factor of education amongst the blind has, generally speaking, only flowered during the past twenty-five years, the growth of the Braille Press is fairly satisfactory. The great difficulty is lack of funds for publicity purposes. The blind cannot see, as other people, reading matter all around them, and intensive propaganda is needed to bring to their notice a sure means of education and recreation. Wireless should be an immense help in bringing before the notice of blind people the available means for alleviating their handicap, and we trust that facilities may be forthcoming in all countries for periodical "talks" specially for blind people.

The United States, Great Britain, and Germany apparently lead in the number of Braille publications and ink-print journals dealing with the blind world. In the United States, practically all Braille periodicals are in Grade One-and-a-half or New York Point; in Great Britain, all are in Grade Two,

NEWS OF THE BLIND WORLD

Automatic Telephones for the Blind.

THE Post Office has made it possible for the dial system on the automatic telephone to be used by blind persons. Two small cuts are made opposite the figures "4" and "7" on the dial.

"By calculating from these two figures a blind person will be able to find any figure he wants," an official of the Post Office stated to a representative of the *Daily Telegraph*. "The figure 1 he can find with ease because it is the first, and the 0 also because it is the last. By having the 4 and 7 marked he can easily find the 3 and 5 and the 6 and 8 which are on either side of them.

"Our men are already calling on blind subscribers who have the automatic system to file these cuts, and on all new blind subscribers' telephones they will be made."

Presentation in Hampshire.

A cheque and a gold watch, suitably inscribed, have been presented to Miss J. Stevenson on her resignation of the Secretaryship of the Hampshire Association for the Care of the Blind, by the Committee and friends connected with her work.

Braille Centenary Effort, 1929.

In connection with the Braille Centenary Appeal of the National Institute for the Blind, many offers of help have been received, not only from musical organisations and musical people in this country, but from the Dominions. Remarkable responses have come from South Africa, for instance. In the cities of Capetown, Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth and Worcester, Festival Performances of Mendelssohn's "Hymn of Praise" have been arranged (under municipal auspices) with massed choirs, orchestra and organ. The proceeds have been a most gratifying addition to the Centenary Fund.

Sympathisers can associate themselves with this effort by similar performances, or in any other way they think fit. Every contribution, however small, is welcome, and will be gratefully acknowledged, if addressed to the Secretary, Braille Centenary Appeal, c/o National Institute for the Blind, 224, Gt. Portland Street, W.1.

Blind of Richmond.

A Sub-Committee of the Surrey Voluntary Association has been formed in Richmond.

New Barclay Home Chairman.

Mr. G. Francis Donne has been elected Chairman of the Barclay Home, Brighton, in place of Major-General Sir Reginald Duckland, K.C.M.G., C.B., who has resigned because he is leaving Sussex.

The National Library—a Correction.

In last month's BEACON it was stated that there are 12,191 volumes in stock in the National Library. This number is the actual increase of volumes during the year, the total number of volumes in stock being approximately 155,000.

New System of Heating National Institute.

An economical low-pressure system of heating has been installed at the National Institute for the Blind. The employment of stokers has been saved by the installation of Oil-o-matic oil burners. The units are entirely automatic in operation. The temperature regulator is very simply adjusted, ensuring maximum efficiency. There are adequate safety devices, and the only attention required is an occasional cleaning of the burners.

Replica of King's Invalid Tray Made by Blind Man.

A replica of the wicker-work invalid tray used by the King for taking his meals in bed during his illness was an interesting feature of the Exhibition of British-made Basket-ware last month.

The tray, which occupied a place of honour on the stall of the London Association for the Blind, was made by a blind person and was the same in every detail, except in colour, as that used by the King. The King's tray was in red and gold, and the one exhibited was in green and gold.

The exhibitors included the School for the Blind, Swiss Cottage, and the Incorporated Association for Promoting the General Welfare of the Blind.

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EDUCATING THE BLIND BY WIRELESS

A CHANCE WHICH IS BEING NEGLECTED



THE practical use of wireless to the blind has not, we believe, been sufficiently recognized. A wireless set is obviously, of course, a God-send to any blind person as a simple means of recreation and of whiling away pleasantly many an hour which might otherwise be spent in the very real loneliness of physical darkness. But it appears to us that the educational benefits of wireless have not been sufficiently grasped by the blind themselves or stressed by those interested in their welfare. It is no exaggeration to say, and we have said this before, that wireless can revolutionize the blind world; it is the one supreme educational means in a world of people who cannot see but who can hear.

Some months ago we printed an article on Group Discussion of Wireless Talks. We thought that that article would inspire tens and hundreds of people interested in the blind to some kind of keen—even enthusiastic—response. But we were disappointed. The interest created was practically negligible.

One reason for this apathy is, we believe, the general ignorance of the rapid development during recent years of wireless as a means of adult education amongst the population of this country generally. It is with great pleasure, therefore, that we reprint the remarks of the Archbishop of York, Mr. G. H. Cater, Education Officer of the London County Council,

and Dr. Montague Rendall of the British Broadcasting Corporation at the fifth meeting of the Central Council for Broadcast Adult Education held on October 23rd, at the Polytechnic, Regent Street, London.

The Archbishop of York, who recently accepted the chairmanship of the Central Council, presided in that capacity for the first time.

Educational Value of Wireless.

In the course of his address, the Archbishop thanked the Council and the B.B.C. for inviting him to become chairman of the Central Council. He said that he had been, for the space of about two years, an enthusiastic believer in the possible value of broadcasting as an instrument of education and the promotion of national culture generally, but he took a long time to come to that conclusion. They were probably familiar with that list of occupations which Coleridge set out as those to which men betook themselves to avoid the pain either of activity or of vacuity of mind, which ended with reading magazines and spitting over bridges. There was a period when he (Dr. Temple) was wondering whether listening-in would have to be added to Coleridge's list of such occupations. The policy of the Corporation and the work of the Central Council were, he believed, the two main factors in averting the ill.

One of the greatest evils of our times was found in the terrible ease with which people

could be amusingly occupied throughout the day if they liked to be, without ever discovering an interest of their own to which they had to apply themselves, and it was clearly only too possible if a wrong turn had been taken—which was most decisively avoided—that broadcasting should itself be adding to that evil.

Grateful to the B.B.C.

He was one of those who were profoundly grateful to the Corporation for the policy they had steadily pursued in maintaining the standard that had been set in the programmes and for the whole enterprise which was represented by the creation of that Council. His own interest in adult education had come mainly through the Workers' Educational Association. In that work one became aware that progress was very slow and what made the slowness of the progress inevitable was the fact that the standard, quite rightly set, was one which very few people were going to be able to reach without more preliminary assistance than any existing agency was providing. One of the greatest functions of broadcasting was the filling in of the gap. There could be no greater service to the community than to reveal to people the highest interests which were really congenial to their own temperament and nature, but which had never been called into activity by any opportunity that had come to them.

The Value of Discussion.

They must not give people only what you thought they ought to want, but what they did want; they must take people where they were. Secondly, they should to the utmost cater for the discussion of what was provided—and that in the most critical spirit possible—because it was only in discussion that people began to get their own mental teeth into the subject and began the process of digestion in which the whole value of any educational process resided. As a convert he thought that there was here one of the greatest possible instruments for the true progress of the people in those respects, which in the end did matter most and were most determinative of all other movements; and it was in the hope of being able to offer a very humble contribution to them that he had been proud to accept the chairmanship.

Mr. G. H. Cater, Education Officer, L.C.C., and Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Central Council, in referring to the work which had been accomplished, said one of their

foremost tasks had been the inauguration of a system of Area Councils. Such Councils had been formed in the West Midlands, in the North West and in Yorkshire, and through the kindness of the Carnegie Trustees, they had grants towards experiments in the West Midlands Area, also in Kent, and they hoped, later, in connection with another experiment elsewhere. Also they had a grant in aid of the provision of sets in distressed areas. A very large number of conferences and demonstrations had been held in different parts of the country, something like 43 in all; the recent conference in Newcastle was attended by no less than 800 delegates, a striking recognition of the importance attached to educational broadcasting in that part of the country.

Another line of development had been the issue of listening sets on loan. At present there were 64 such sets issued and it was hoped that that number might shortly be increased to 80.

Spread of the Movement.

Two hundred and eighty-one libraries were receiving 22,000 copies of the Talks and Lectures Programme for distribution to their public. The effect of this was strikingly brought home by a report from the libraries at Newcastle, who witnessed to the issue of over 1,500 books in a single session, all of which were recommended for study in the Talks and Lectures Programme. That kind of co-operation was of the greatest value. The local education authorities were showing sympathy in the Council's work. A portable set had been provided for experiment in rural areas in Lancashire and a trained and salaried group leader had been provided at Leeds. The Rural Community Councils had also co-operated most helpfully in many different parts of the country. Although the past year had inevitably been a year of survey and of pioneer effort, it had not been a wasted year, but they had been building on safe and secure foundations, looking to next year and the succeeding years to reap the benefits sown in the past twelve months.

Dr. Montague Rendall, speaking on behalf of the B.B.C. and for Mrs. Philip Snowden, remarked that group listeners were at the moment the most important and the most difficult part of the Council's organisation. They were being put upon their legs North and South in this country. The Council would watch, stimulate and support them in every possible way they could. Such listeners were

the heart and core of the Council's work. There were thousands who would join those groups; there were millions who would never join and every programme had to be framed with the double intention. They must meet the needs of the groups and must also try to cater for that wide and growing community which already numbered millions.

B.B.C. Will Aid Blind Groups.

These speeches should immediately inspire everyone connected with the blind world with ideas for arousing and stimulating the interest of the blind in wireless as a means of education. Let us repeat the words of the writer of the article which appeared in *The Beacon* for April:—"It is very much hoped that among the many blind listeners some will be sufficiently keen to undertake the organisation of a wireless listening group on the lines presented. Anyone proposing to do so should immediately get in touch with the Adult Education Section of the B.B.C. and find out full particulars of the forthcoming series of talks." May we add that an immense service would be rendered to the blind by sighted persons who would endeavour to organise such groups.

THE EDITOR.

CORRESPONDENCE COURSES FOR ADULT BLIND.

THE Advisory Committee on the Welfare of the Blind have recently had under consideration the question of promoting the further education of the adult blind by means of correspondence courses.

The Committee understand that courses of this nature were organised by voluntary effort last year and that requests have been received by the promoters of the scheme to provide courses in such subjects as English Composition, English Literature, Business Correspondence, History, French, German, Latin, Industrial History and the Theory of Music.

It is felt that many blind persons would desire to take advantage of any arrangements having for their object the provision of courses likely to broaden their interest and outlook in all phases of life and human activity.

Before proceeding to suggest means for the organisation of correspondence courses on a more comprehensive scale, the Advisory Committee are anxious to ascertain the extent to which such courses are likely to be used, and with this end in view invite all blind persons who are interested to send in their

names to the Secretary of the Voluntary Association to which they are attached, or to their Home Visitor at an early date. It is not anticipated that blind persons will be involved in any expense in connection with the courses.

Correspondence on this subject will be welcomed by the Editor of *The Beacon*.



VAGRANCY.

THE Departmental Committee appointed by the Minister of Health to enquire into the administration of the laws relating to the relief of the destitute wayfarers or wanderers, held its preliminary meeting on the 8th October and decided that it would be necessary to take evidence from the principal Government Departments concerned in the matter, from local administrators, including members of poor law authorities and their officers, from local justices and police officers, and from the various voluntary associations and charitable bodies interested in the subject. In order to expedite their work the Committee decided to request the persons and bodies from whom they wish to receive evidence to prepare in advance memoranda setting forth the evidence and representations which they wish the Committee to take into consideration. The Committee will, as soon as possible, invite the authorities and bodies from whom they wish to receive evidence to submit such memoranda. and will, after considering them, decide whether they wish the memoranda to be supplemented by the oral evidence of witnesses.



DELIUS AND THE BLIND

FREDERICK DELIUS, the famous blind composer, has graciously dedicated one of his works to the National Institute for the Blind "to mark the Braille Music Centenary and as a tribute to the Institute's sixty years of service to the blind." The work chosen by the composer for dedication is an "Air and Dance" for string orchestra, and adaptable for violin and piano. Its first public performance took place in the Aeolian Hall, London, on 16th October, in connection with the Delius Festival, when it was played by a special orchestra under the conductorship of Sir Thomas Beecham. Two other works by Delius, namely, "Summer Night on the River" and "On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring" have just been added to the Institute's Music Catalogue.

NATIONAL WORK FOR THE BLIND

A REVIEW OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE



THE Annual Report of the National Institute for the Blind for the year ended March 31st, 1929, is not only an account of the year's work and statement of accounts, but a book intended to awaken and stimulate interest in work for the blind generally. Accordingly, the details of the year's work are supplemented by a summary of results achieved by the Institute since 1868 along five main lines of development, and the whole Report is illustrated by reproductions of photographs of the blind at work and play in the Institute's Departments, Homes and Hostels.

The outstanding feature of the past year has been the continuance of the Institute's efforts to unify work for the blind throughout the country. The Institute considers that every existing means of minimizing the handicap of blindness should be available to every blind person, and that the "pooling" of knowledge and experience is the first essential to its universal dissemination. The collecting agreements made by the Institute, in conjunction with the National Library, with local agencies are helping towards this ideal. In some areas, the local society is responsible for collecting; in others, the collecting is managed by the Institute; but in either case the result is an equitable distribution to local and national work for the blind of the fruits of public generosity.

The number of agencies with which the Institute has collecting agreements was increased during the year from 67 to 79. The two types of agreement have now been standardised, and it is hoped that gradually all agreements, either new or renewed, will follow the standard forms. This will greatly simplify accounting and general administration.

During the year, allocations under these agreements to local agencies in areas where the Institute collects, amounted to £20,074 13s. 4d. Fixed and special grants made by the Institute irrespective of agreements, amounted to £1,664 19s. 2d.

Embossed Literature and Music.

The production of embossed literature has been well maintained. During the year, the following publications were issued:—

BRAILLE.

BOOKS AND PERIODICALS—	
Bound Volumes (general literature) ..	21,563
Pamphlets	11,590
Magazines	198,973
Newspapers	350,624
MS. BOOKS FOR STUDENTS—	
Bound Volumes	684
MUSIC—	
Bound Volumes	1,247
Pamphlets (Braille equivalent of sheet music)	11,995
LITERATURE PLATES STEREOTYPED—	
Books, magazines and newspapers ..	21,859
MUSIC PLATES STEREOTYPED ..	2,065

MOON.

BOOKS AND PERIODICALS—	
Bound volumes (general literature) ..	6,260
Pamphlets, alphabets, etc.	13,938
Magazines	3,172
Newspapers and Supplements	30,806
PAGES OF TYPE SET	8,802

A completely revised catalogue of all publications has been recently issued.

The last portion of the new compact edition of the Authorised Version of the Bible was completed during the year. From the time the first portion was published, nearly 4,000 separate volumes have been printed and sold.

Moon Literature.

The demand for Moon literature is steadily increasing. The number of pages of Moon type set shows an increase of 10 per cent. over the previous year's increase of 35 per cent.

The policy of printing limited editions of new publications direct from type has been continued, and is receiving the steady support of the blind and libraries for the blind at home, in the Colonies, and in America—the Moon Society being practically the sole producer of Moon books in the world.

Appreciation of Braille Periodicals.

Below is an extract from one amongst a great many letters received from contented subscribers to the Institute's embossed periodicals:—

"Once again I desire to express great thanks and appreciation of your efforts to make your periodicals of interest. I wish you every success in the future, with the assurance that your work is well worth while, as it is largely by your efforts that the blind are kept in touch with the topics of the day, both social and educational."

New Books for Students.

The volumes copied into Braille by voluntary Braille writers and added to the Students' Library during the year included text-books in innumerable subjects.

No praise is high enough for the work of the voluntary writers. No matter how difficult a book may be or how urgently it may be needed, there is always someone to undertake it.

130 candidates entered for the Braille examination during the year, 37 obtaining certificates of proficiency.

Here is one amongst many letters of appreciation received by the Institute from blind students:—

"I scarcely know how to express my sense of the beneficence of your Library. I only know that without the strenuous exertions of the MS. Department, my course at Manchester would have been well nigh impossible. As it is, it has terminated successfully with a second class Honours Degree."

Braille Music.

The output of Braille Music was maintained, and the revised and entirely re-arranged catalogue, published during the year, contains a list of over 4,000 works.

In connection therewith, Prof. Granville Bantock, M.A., D.Mus., the distinguished composer and Principal of the Birmingham and Midland Institute of Music, wrote: "It is a wonderful record . . . a Braille Music Catalogue of over 4,000 selected works."; and Irby Chapman, A.R.C.O., a blind musician, wrote:—"May I, as a humble organist and teacher of music, take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation of the splendid work the Institute is doing. It is truly possible in these days for a blind man to practice as a musician. . . . Too great praise cannot be given you who have moved with the times."

Sunshine Homes for Blind Babies.

The following table gives the admissions and discharges during the year ended March 31st, at the Institute's three Sunshine Homes for

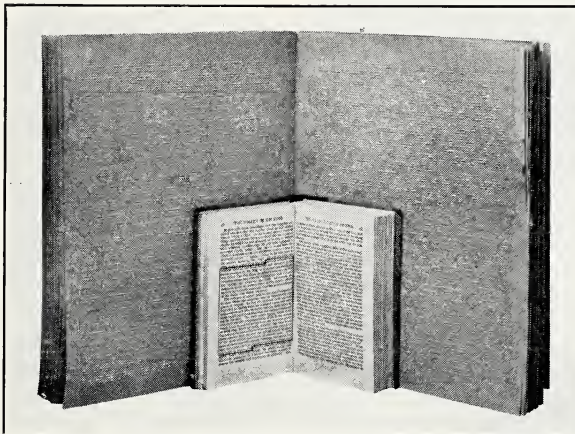
Blind Babies at Chorley wood (and Abbotskerswell), Southport and Leamington.

	Chorley Wood.	South- port.	Leaming- ton.	Total
Number in Homes on				
31st March, 1928 ..	19	31	31	= 81
Add admissions during				
year	*10	5	8	= 23
	29	36	39	= 104
Less Discharges ..	6	7	*8	= 21
	—	—	—	—
Totals on 31st March,				
1929	23	29	31	= 83

* Two children were transferred from Leamington to Chorley Wood.

DISCHARGES—

- 9 Transferred to Residential Schools for the Blind.
- 2 Transferred to L.C.C. Day Schools for the Blind.
- 1 Transferred to Sighted School.
- 6 Unsuitable for further retention—mental and physical disabilities.
- 1 Too much sight.



THE BRAILLE CHARACTERS IN THE TWO LARGE PAGES REPRESENT THE PRINT ENCLOSED IN BLACK LINES.

"The babies learn through play, so they love learning," says the Report. "One of the most interesting stages is the beginning of conversation. These little ones are most sociable. They use their small fingers from the earliest months to carry experience to their brains, and then, wish to share them with the big friends around them. They learn to dress and undress—difficult operations—by dressing

and undressing dolls. They love the world out of doors—flowers, frost, wind and sea—and are exceptionally keen on weather conditions! Music is a joy to every one of them; compared with children who have eyesight, their hearing is wonderfully acute."

College for Blind Girls.

The number of pupils at Chorley Wood College for girls with little or no sight is 35. There is accommodation for 45.

Amongst the newcomers during the year were five girls who were formerly at big Public Schools. Owing to partial blindness their efforts to progress were without effect, but now, at Chorley Wood, they are doing good independent work by means of Braille

—an essential they lacked at other schools. A list of recent Examination and other successes was given in *The Beacon* for August.

Blind Masseurs and Masseuses.

The work of the Massage School and Department has been successfully maintained. During the year :—

20 students joined the School.

9 presented themselves for examination in Massage, Medical Gymnastics and Medical Electricity, successfully qualified and duly passed out.

1 took Post-Graduate Course in Medical Electricity and successfully qualified.

1 attended School for refresher course.

Of students who passed out :—

6 have started in private practice.

1 combines a clinic appointment with private practice.

3 have gone abroad—two to South Africa where it is anticipated that hospital posts will be obtained, and the other to Canada.

1 Settlement is at present being handled.

6 Students have benefited from the definite number of scholarships awarded by Gardner's Trust for the Blind.

16 Students are at present in training, including a South African, a Canadian and a New Zealander; two are old Worcester College boys.

An addition to the School curriculum has been made—a course in educational gymnastics.

Several extracts are given from letters of appreciation addressed to the Massage Department. Here is one of these :—

"I know the practical sympathy and sound business side you and your staff always bring into play on our behalf cannot be repaid in coin. Whenever we write to ask for help in our work, back

comes the reply by return of post, and we are able to achieve the results we aim at. I am sure that without the co-operation of you all we should often find ourselves in very tight corners."

Homes and Hostels.

During the year ended March 31st, 367 blind men and women were admitted to the Convalescent and Holiday Home at St. Leonards-on-Sea.

The two Homes for Blind Women at Brighton and Clifton have been full throughout the year.

In June, 1928, another Hostel for Blind Women was opened at 9, Oval Road, similar to that at No. 8. The Hostel accommodates twelve girls, and so far the experiment has been entirely successful.

Personal Service for the Blind.

The various forms of personal services for the blind undertaken by the Institute are expressed in the following figures for the year :—

Augmentation of Wages of Blind Employees ..	£5,526
Training Fees provided	£413
Grants for Higher Education	£2,348
General Relief	£4,171
Relief of Non-pensionable Ex-service Men ..	£2,178
Provision of Wireless Equipment	£819

Number of Christmas Parcels distributed ..	800
Number of Cases assisted with dentures ..	32

The Department takes the utmost care to avoid the mere payment of doles, and aims at setting applicants so far as is possible on their own legs, co-operating in every case with agencies concerned with the welfare of the blind in the area.

One form of direct assistance to the blind is their regular employment in carrying out the Institute's work. During the year a sum of £15,126 was paid in salaries, wages, etc., to blind employees who at present number 121.

How much the Ex-Service Men's Fund is appreciated is illustrated by the following extract from a letter received from the British Legion :—



EUCLID HAS NO MYSTERIES FOR THE BLIND MATHEMATICIAN,
WHO SOLVES HIS PROBLEMS ON A SPECIAL BOARD.

"As a result of the assistance which your Association rendered to this ex-officer, he has been successful in passing his final examination in Law, though handicapped by complete blindness as a result of the War. My Committee wish to place on record their deep appreciation of the valuable assistance which the National Institute for the Blind rendered in this case."

The distribution of wireless sets during the past year has been thwart with difficulties, partly through lack of funds, partly as a result of the Regional Scheme now in force in the London district. Up to the present, 1,466 wireless sets and 1,802 pairs of headphones have been distributed amongst the blind with the help of the various County Associations.

Employment Research.

The Placement Committee's work during the past year has been of a very far-reaching nature, embracing nearly every sphere of employment in the blind world.

A Psychologist, under the supervision of the National Institute of Industrial Psychology, has been appointed to study all possibilities for the employment of the blind. These can be divided into three sections :—

1. Increasing the openings for the higher educated blind.
2. Increasing the openings for blind manual workers.
3. Examining the working conditions in workshops for the blind.

Along each of these lines progress in the collection and analysis of data is reported.

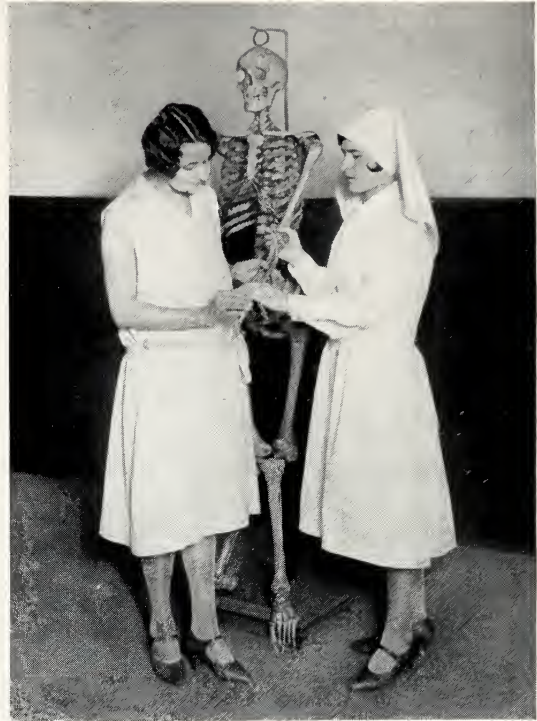
Help for Home Workers.

The following figures relative to the year's work of the Home Industries Scheme, managed by the Institute and operating in London South of the Thames, Kent, Surrey, Sussex, and Hampshire, are of interest :—

Goods purchased from Blind Home Workers by the Institute	£4,673
Goods purchased from Workshops for the Blind by the Institute	£2,715
Materials purchased for Use of Home Workers	£2,453
Provision of Tools, etc., for Home Workers	£306
Gifts of Materials to Home Workers	£250

An Office Council and a Five-Day Week.

Two interesting experiments in internal administration have been made during the year. The first is the formation of a Works and Office Council on the lines of those Works Councils which many big industrial concerns



BLIND TEACHER DEMONSTRATING TO A BLIND STUDENT THE MOVEMENTS OF THE BONES OF THE FOREARM.

of to-day have adopted to the great betterment of industrial relations. It represents all grades of the Institute's employees, both sighted and blind, and should be of great value in enabling the Council and staff of the Institute to co-operate wholeheartedly in their work for the blind.

The second is the establishment of a five-day week for the Institute's blind employees. This innovation is at the moment "a controlled experiment," that is to say, the effect of the shorter working week on output is being carefully watched, but there is every promise that the results will be entirely satisfactory.

A Roll of Honour.

In view of the growing number of outstanding scholastic achievements by blind men and women, the Institute has decided to prepare a Roll of Honour which will be suitably exhibited in the Armitage Hall at the Institute's Headquarters.

OUR BLACK BLIND

By "E. K."



HAVE, in the past few years, visited many Institutions for the Blind, but a recent visit was the strangest within my experience, for when I entered the unexplored Institution I found that every pupil, every teacher, every attendant was black—the matron alone being white.

At one long table sat women and girls, and at another sat men and boys. They all had their Braille books, most of which bore the imprint of the National Institute for the Blind, London.

Reading and Speaking English.

One rather expected to hear these black blind people reading and speaking in some foreign and perhaps unknown language. Such, however, was not the case. It was, of course, only a passing impression, and I soon discovered that they were reading and speaking English.

The ages of those seated at the tables ranged from boys and girls of 9 or 10, to men and women, some of whom had lost their sight in later life, all endeavouring to acquire knowledge which would help them to be useful to the community.

There was a curious fact in connection with one of the boys—a clever little chap who read quite fluently, and was quite an adept with his figure machine, adding English money sums and changing into dollars or *vice versa* with great facility.

I asked what was the cause of his blindness for the sockets were empty, and I imagined he had met with an accident. To my surprise I was informed that he was born so. This must surely be a very unique case.

The women and girls, besides receiving instruction in Braille, were trained in some light occupation to enable them to pass their time usefully in their homes and earn money.

From the class room I was taken to a large airy and cool workshop in which baskets of all kinds and shapes were being made. The fancy cane work was as good as anything I have seen anywhere, and the willow work was also excellent.

For some reason, when I entered, I expected to see work of a very inferior quality. Like others before me I had underrated the ability of those members of the Empire whose skin

is darker than our own, but I was soon to realize that there was ability though the skin was black. Perhaps it will be better for the Empire for us all to remember that.

In another workshop a few men were engaged in joinery, though this has not been developed to any extent.

Upstairs was a large dormitory for the younger girls—clean and tidy and open like the rest of the place. Attached was a small dispensary in which minor mishaps could be attended to.

Wherever I went, there was I surrounded by black blind people. For years I have been accustomed to being in the presence of hundreds of white blind people, but the difference in the colour of the skin had the effect of making me somewhat diffident about talking to them, the unfortunate feeling still holding sway in my mind that it was necessary to speak in some language other than English. However, that soon disappeared, and those with whom I conversed on the subject of their work did so most intelligently.

Several of the girls had been taught to play the piano, and those whom I heard had reached quite a good degree of proficiency. It needed but a word for two of them to rise from their places at the work-table, find their way to the piano, and take their positions for a duet which they performed quite commendably for my benefit.

Typewriting Behind the Times.

For want of financial support, the typewriting department was the only one which seemed to me to be behind the times, indeed far behind what one would like to see. There is only one machine, and that of quite ancient pattern, and although those who learn to write upon it attain fair degree of speed and correctness, I am doubtful whether they would find it an easy matter to transfer from it to a modern machine in a commercial office.

A very pleasant gesture was made at my departure when one of the men spoke on behalf of those present, and asked me to convey from the Trinidad Institute for the Blind their good wishes and greetings to the men of St. Dunstan's, to the blind cared for by the National Institute, and to the blind generally in the British Isles.

I promised to do so.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

THE adaptability of blind organists is an unfailing source of amazement, says *Musical Opinion*, but the organ at St. Clement Danes must surely prove exceptionally difficult, so elevated are the uppermost stops of the two long tiers on either side. Nevertheless, the Wednesday lunchtime recitals are handed over periodically to blind organists under the auspices of the National Institute for the Blind. Such a series has been in progress, and naturally enough, the programmes have included several pieces by blind composers.

Blind Singers' Success at Blackpool Festival.

In winning the open class for two 16th century Elizabethan songs at the Blackpool musical festival on the 15th October, Miss Eleanore Skidmore, a 19-year old girl of Burnley who has been blind from birth, proved herself, says the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, not only a singer of merit and artistic ability, but a woman of character and grit.

The two 16th century songs, "Clear and Cloudy," by John Dowland, and "Down in a Valley," by Michael Cavendish, were difficult tests for the competitors who had to accompany their own singing. The sympathetic understanding of the songs by Miss Skidmore earned the warm praise of Sir Richard Terry, the adjudicator.

"I am delighted to have done so well," said Miss Skidmore, when congratulated on her success, "for it is the first time I have ever done anything like this. I started to go to school at Nelson when I was five—I have always been blind—and Mr. Barratt, the schoolmaster, took a great interest in me. He induced me to learn to play the piano when I was about seven, so that I have been playing about 12 years now. I only took up singing about three years ago. I have to do everything by touch and ear. The copies of these songs were sent to me in July, and I had to send them to London to the National Institute for the Blind to be transcribed into Braille so that I could read them and play them."

Another example of plucky determination shown during the day was that of Audrey G. Webster, a 12-years old competitor in the pianoforte class, who was knocked down and rendered temporarily unconscious by a cyclist while she was on her way to the festival.

Although she was badly shaken she insisted on going to the festival and playing, and took second place in her class.

Blind Scullers.

In the sculling races on the lake in Regent's Park last month the young men and women competitors were students from the school for the Blind, Swiss Cottage. The boats, however, were steered by people who could see.

The blind competitors have been trained for only a short time, but, says the *Paddington Mercury*, they can row perfectly, never missing a stroke or "catching a crab." Many of them have been blind from birth.

Their trainer, Mr. C. E. Rose, told a reporter that they had taken up rowing with great enthusiasm. "I have not found them more difficult to teach than boys who have all the advantages of sight," he said.

Harry Dedson was proclaimed the best oarsman of the School. Dedson, who is 32, is a piano tuner, and totally blind. He rowed in a mixed doubles race with his sister, who is also blind.

PERSONALIA

Mr. John W. Turner.

THE Committee of the Manchester and Salford Blind Aid Society have appointed Mr. John W. Turner as Superintendent of their work amongst the Blind in Manchester, Salford and part of the Lancashire County Council area under their care.

Mr. John W. Turner has had wide and continuous experience amongst the Blind since 1913 with the exception of three years service in H.M. Overseas Forces. In accepting the new appointment he relinquishes the post of Supervisor of Home Workers in Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Staffordshire and Shropshire in connection with the Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind.

Mr. Turner will take up his new duties on 1st December.

Mr. J. Talfourd Wood.

Mr. J. Talfourd Wood has resigned the position of Hon. Treasurer to the East Sussex Association for the Blind, and Mr. Montague Henry Eyre, of Northern Breach, Cuckfield, has been appointed by the Executive Committee to take his place.

REPORTS FROM THE INSTITUTIONS

London Society for Teaching and Training the Blind

AN excellent feature of this Report—the Ninety-first of the Society—is the wealth and quality of the illustrations. Pictures convey so much more to the modern eye than figures and dry facts. A picture of blind children playing “oranges and lemons” will open the purse of many a man or woman unaffected by statistics. And in these photographs, the camera man has been a wonderful “smile catcher.” All these blind people are smiling—knitters, chair makers, children in the playground, the proud May Queen, girls at work and at recreation, and especially the group of “Old Boys” at a re-union. Such pictures inspire the regular subscriber, and astound the newcomer in the world of the blind.

The youngest pupil of the Society's School for the Blind at Swiss Cottage is five; its oldest worker is 84. The period between these ages illustrates the scope of the Society's work.

The numbers on the Society's register on 31st March, were:—374 boys and men; 187 girls and women, making a total of 561. For three years, instruction has been carried on by an adaptation of the Dalton plan,—the essential feature of the adaptation being the constant supervision of pupils at work and at play. To counteract the disabling effect of blindness and to foster the attainment of average physique and vitality is one of the aims of a residential School like Swiss Cottage. The pupils are lifted from lethargy to energy. Thus friendly competition is promoted, for example, in the Boy's School by a division into four Houses named after pioneers of work for the blind:—Haüy, Lucas, Braille and Armitage.

In occupational training the main lines of activity are music, pianoforte tuning, machine knitting, boot repairing, basket making and chair caning. The Society is catering for an increasing number of men and women who lose their sight in adult years.

The Society's workshops are dispersed over a wide area, but as the number of employees is ever increasing, it has been no easy task to secure sufficient work to keep everyone busy. All employees are paid at Trade Union rates, but 15s. per week is paid to each worker in augmentation. The amount paid in wages and

augmentation amounted to £19,300—a record for the Society.

The Society manages the Home Workers' Scheme in the Counties of Middlesex, Essex, Bucks, Berkshire, Hertfordshire, West Suffolk, London North of the Thames and the County Boroughs of West Ham, East Ham and Southend. The number of home workers is 196.

Hampshire Association for the Care of the Blind

This Association deals with the 542 blind of Hampshire. It runs a Home Teaching Scheme while the Home Workers' Scheme for Hampshire is administered by the National Institute. Pensions and relief are administered. Thanks are rendered to the National Institute for gifts of wireless sets and the Scriptures in Moon and Braille. The sum of £1,065 was expended in relief of the necessitous blind. The majority of the Hampshire blind are in very poor circumstances.

In raising funds, the Association is endeavouring to ensure that every place in the Administrative County of Hampshire shall organise at least one money-raising effort each year, and good progress is reported in this direction.

Wilts County Association for the Care of the Blind

The total number of blind in Wiltshire on the register of this Association is 560. Of these, 17 are home workers, 45 are otherwise employed (not in workshops), 12 are under training, and 457 are unemployable. Social centres are established at Swindon, Trowbridge, Chippenham, Salisbury and Warminster. The two home teachers have worked successfully but there is room for two more.

Pembrokeshire Blind Society

This Society is responsible, with the help of the local County Council, for 93 blind people, to whom £187 has been paid in pensions and £344 10s. in County grants during the 15 months ended 31st March, 1929.

The Report emphasizes the necessity for the appointment of a Home Teacher or Home Visitor, a matter which is also stressed, according to the Report, by the Ministry of Health.

Henshaw's Institution for the Blind

The average attendance at the Elementary School during the year was 119. The importance of early admission is strongly emphasized, and the Local Education Authorities are congratulated by the Report on their efficient arrangements for seeking out children without undue delay. Pupils undergoing Technical "A" Training have averaged 73 in number.

A feature of the School is the out-door sport. A specially adapted form of cricket is particularly popular, and the Scout Group comprises over 40 boys and 8 scouters. It is organized in three sections, Wolf Cubs, Scouts and Rovers.

The Music Department has been most successful, fourteen first-class successes being reported for the year.

Technical "B" Training is given to men and women who lose their sight somewhat late in life. The average attendance was 53.

In the three Homes in Old Trafford, 69 blind men and women find a refuge from poverty and loneliness. A scheme has been drawn up to transfer these premises to the seaside, and it is hoped that the new premises will be erected in the course of the next two or three years. Included in the scheme is a Holiday and Convalescent Wing for Blind Children, and the scheme has been approved in outline by the Ministry of Health and the Board of Education. In respect of the scheme, an initial grant of £3,000 has been received from the National Institute for the Blind, and provided that within the next two years, £10,000 has been raised by Henshaw's Institution and an agreement for the unification of collections has been effected, the National Institute will make a further grant of £3,000.

The number of blind workers now in the Workshops amount to 189. Sales have increased during the year by £2,283, and trading losses have been decreased by £2,500 during the last three years. Stock of manufactured goods has been reduced by £2,440.

The Board of Management consider that new industries must be discovered, and it has been decided to establish a department for the manufacture of furniture. Wire-twisted brushes have been successfully produced, and excellent results have been obtained with the manufacture of knitwear in finer counts.

The Home Workers' Scheme provides for 26 blind men and women, who last year earned £1,201, augmented by £517 10s.

Tynemouth Blind Welfare Society and Northern Counties' Library

The year has been an eventful one. The new workshops have been completed; a large legacy has been bequeathed to the Society by the late Joseph Viney which "may have far-reaching consequences for the needy blind in the Borough;" and the Society took an active part in the organization of the very successful exhibit of blind industries at the North-Eastern Exhibition, Newcastle, which has been described in *The Beacon*.

Sales have again increased, and the workshops have been fully occupied.

From the Library 4,409 volumes were issued during the year, and 200 copies of the quarterly magazine *Dawn* were printed.

A local group of blind Girl Guides has been formed.

The separate report of the Home Teaching Department, on the roll of which are 86 blind people, is bright and interesting.

Metropolitan and Adjacent Counties' Association for the Blind

The number of blind persons on the register of this Association—which covers Berks, Essex, Hants, Hertford, Kent, London, Middlesex, Surrey and Sussex—is 14,740, 5,763 of whom are resident in London. It is of interest to note that the most densely blind-populated districts of London are, in order, Islington, Lambeth, and Wandsworth,—each having over 400 blind residents.

The Report states "that in pursuance of the objects of the Association and in order more efficiently to deal with the heavy and increasing work . . . it has been decided that the Metropolitan work should be no longer dealt with by the Executive Council of the Metropolitan and Adjacent Counties' Association for the Blind. With this object in view and as a result of formal Resolutions duly passed and recorded, a new Body—entitled the Metropolitan Society for the Blind—has been created as from 1st April, 1929, to deal with the work in the Metropolitan Area."

The names of the Societies constituting this Body for the first three years, and the names of the members of the new Executive Council also being constituted, are given.

The Report adds: "This change in the machinery of the Association will be more apparent than real and the work will continue on the same lines as hitherto."

INTERNATIONAL NOTES

Majority of Montreal Association

IN 21 years the wages paid to blind employees by the Montreal Association for the Blind, Incorporated, has increased from 550 dollars to 33,000 dollars, while the number employed has risen from 4 to 55 blind men and women, Mrs. P. E. Layton, Hon. Secretary, stated in presenting the "coming of age" Report at the 21st annual meeting, held last month.

Other comparative figures given by Mrs. Layton illustrated the growth of the Association. During the first year, a room was rented with a floor space of 800 square feet. To-day, the organisation owns 400,000 square feet of land and two buildings, whose floor space amounts to 30,300 square feet. The income from sales has increased from 752 dollars to 67,296 dollars.

P. E. Layton, president of the Montreal Association for the Blind, in replying to an expression of thanks accorded him for his work for the blind people of Canada, stated that for several years before he began his work in 1908 he had considered that this particular job was his. He paid a tribute to the unremitting assistance of his wife through the years of organisation, and since.

He stated that the work of the Montreal Association for the Blind had been very far reaching. He referred to the Canadian Federation of the Blind which was founded at the Association's quarters here in 1926, at a conference of blind people from all over the Dominion. This organisation is a union of the blind, its chief object being to secure better social and economic conditions for the sightless people of the Dominion. It also publishes a quarterly magazine which is sent free to all known blind persons.

In a plea for the support of the public on behalf of legislation granting pensions to the blind, Mr. Layton pointed out that statistics show that over 50 per cent. of the blind in Canada are over 50 years of age and that many are unemployable.

Mrs. Layton reviewed the activities of the Association. Education is given in the school of the Association along the lines of that provided in the public schools and, in addition, the pupils are instructed in piano and organ-playing, piano-tuning, typewriting, chair-

caning and basketry. Physical development is encouraged through the courtesy of the Y.M.C.A.

Constant employment was given the workers throughout the year and the amount paid in augmentation of wages to the blind amounted to 6,200 dollars.

A summarized list of the blind under the care of the Institution was given as follows: Pupils in the residential school, 20; workers in the industrial department, instructors, salesmen, collectors, home teachers and workers, 55; unemployable blind receiving pensions, 9.

British Braille Music in America

It is an interesting and significant sign of the gradual spread of the international use of one system of Braille Music Notation that a request for several Catalogues of Braille Music, published in the English Music Notation system, has been recently received from Jacksonville, Illinois, U.S.A. The music published by the Institute is described as "a Braille treasury." The internationalization of Braille systems of printing both music and literature is all for the benefit of the blind in every country, as it opens for them hitherto unknown sources of education and recreation.

Progress of the Calcutta Blind School.

Lal Behari Shah, the founder of the Calcutta Blind School, died last year, but his work remains as a lasting monument. He established the School on a sound basis, and his son is carrying on as his successor. The number of pupils during last year reached 92, the dormitories are being gradually filled, and the boys' workshop has been extended. The Government have increased their grant from Rs. 400/- to Rs. 635/- per month and the Corporation of Calcutta, since the close of the year, made a grant of Rs. 15,000/- for an isolation sick ward and a gymnasium. Public subscriptions have been maintained and finances have improved. Ex-pupils are doing well, a second pupil obtaining a M.A. degree and taking the University Silver Medal in History. Of the present number of pupils over half are Hindus, about a third Christians, the remainder being Mahomedans and Buddhists. They come from all parts of India, from Darjeeling down to Bombay.

NEWS OF THE BLIND WORLD.

Increased Council Grant in Middlesex.

TO enable the incomes of unemployable blind persons in the county to be augmented by 5s. a week, Middlesex Council, says *The Times*, is to increase its grant to the Middlesex Association for the Blind from £2,228 to £5,612.

Blind Reunion in Manchester.

OCTOBER 11th was founder's day in connection with Henshaw's Institution for the Blind, and there was a very happy reunion of 400 old friends—all of whom were blind.

The event is increasing in popularity every year, and the number that attended on this occasion was, says the *Manchester Evening News*, greater than on any other founder's day since the institution was inaugurated 50 years ago.

Braille Reading Competition in Manchester

THE Annual Braille Reading Competition of the Northern Branch of the National Library for the Blind, 5, St John Street, Manchester, will be held on Saturday, November 16th, 1929. The prizes will be distributed by Lord Armstrong. Intending competitors should send in their names and all particulars to the Secretary, National Library for the Blind, 5, St. John Street, Manchester.

A Pensions Anomaly.

THE Minister of Pensions, Mr. F. O. Roberts, received last month a St. Dunstan's deputation, who raised questions relating to war pensions and allowances to blinded pensioners.

St. Dunstan's afterwards announced that Captain Ian Fraser, who led the deputation, stated that at a conference of representatives of St. Dunstan's work throughout the Dominions, held recently in London, it was disclosed that rates of pensions, wives', childrens', and dependents' allowances, and the regulations governing these awards, were in certain respects less advantageous to British blinded soldiers than those applying to their comrades in the Dominions.

It was added that the deputation made proposals with a view to lessening the existing discrepancy, and that Mr. Roberts promised to give these matters careful consideration.

Good Will from Trinidad

MR. Ernest Kessell, the Treasurer of St. Dunstan's, who recently visited the West Indies, has brought back a message from the Institution for the Blind at Trinidad asking him to convey the good wishes of all the members of that Institution to the blind men of St. Dunstan's, to those who are looked after by the National Institute for the Blind, and to the other blind of the United Kingdom. —(See page 8).

Famous Boxer at Massage School

SIGNOR Primo Carnera, the famous giant boxer, accompanied by his manager, Monsieur See, visited the Massage School of the National Institute for the Blind on October 31st. He was welcomed by the Chairman of the National Institute, Capt. Sir Beachcroft Towse, V.C., and the Secretary-General, Mr. W. McG. Eagar, and by Dr. Eichholz, Board of Education, and Dr. S. J. C. Holden, Medical Officer of Health for Buckinghamshire, who were visiting the Massage School at the time; thereafter a series of films was taken, demonstrating Signor Carnera's wonderful muscle action. The first picture taken depicted the Principal of the Massage School and one of the students examining the muscles of the arms and back; the next demonstrated a treatment by massage of the boxer's back by a senior student, then massage of the arm by another student and showing the comparison between the size of the boxer's hands and the student's; also a comparison of his foot beside one of the student's hands.

Primo Carnera is a man of exceptional stature, being six feet eight and a half inches in height; his physical development is phenomenal, his muscles being of enormous size. Great interest was aroused amongst the students, who afterwards examined his muscles, chest, etc., individually.

To round off this interesting visit, Mrs. Millington, the senior woman student of the Massage School, presented Signor Carnera with a buttonhole representing the Italian national colours. As the mighty boxer wended his way through the gymnasium of the school, the students, numbering fourteen, the Principal, two assistant teachers, and the Secretary lined up to wish him goodbye. He shook hands with each in turn and departed to the sounds of rousing cheers.

MR. BALDWIN ON THE BLIND

ANNUAL MEETING OF GREATER LONDON FUND AT MANSION HOUSE



THE Rt. Hon. Stanley Baldwin, M.P., made a sympathetic appeal on behalf of the Greater London Fund for the Blind at the Annual Meeting of the Fund at the Mansion House on October 23rd. The Lord Mayor (Sir Kynaston Studd), who was accompanied by the Lady Mayoress, presided, and the Egyptian Hall was crowded, many having to stand during the proceedings.

A message was received from H.R.H. the Princess Royal, who is Patron of the Fund, expressing great regret that indisposition prevented her from being present at the meeting, and sending her best wishes for its success.

The City's Support of the Fund

The Lord Mayor said the Fund had been in operation since 1921, but until 18 months ago it was conducted by the National Institute on behalf of a limited number of voluntary agencies in the London area. The scope of the Fund had now been widened to embrace 16 voluntary agencies carrying on national, central, and local work for the blind, with management vested in a representative committee. The Fund was in process of being incorporated and that was the first Annual Meeting under the new régime. He was particularly glad that it was being held at the Mansion House, because the City in various ways had continuously and generously supported the work.

New Investigation Needed

Mr. Baldwin said there were certain afflictions of mankind which particularly aroused our sympathy, and among those were blindness and deafness. He thought the time had come when it would be a good thing to investigate again, in the light of modern circumstances, the whole condition of the deaf, the dumb, and the blind. He believed Captain Ian Fraser had already made such a suggestion to the Press. But he had to speak to them that day on one affliction. For many reasons blindness brought a more ready sympathy from people than any other affliction, and to that extent his task in appealing on behalf of the blind was made lighter. What those connected with the Fund were interested in that

day was, in effect—to use a word so much on men's lips to-day—rationalization, the avoidance of waste, to cure the overlapping that had always been, in this country at least, one of the main sources of waste in the administration of nearly every charity. We were getting better, and in this particular matter a real effort had been made and one worthy of support. For instance, there were to be no more of those miscellaneous and odd street collections. They were all to be compressed into one day—Geranium Day. For that relief, much thanks. (Laughter). That was a move in the right direction. The various institutions, such as workshops for the blind, County associations, national institutions—all were alike to benefit in due proportion out of the total sum which would be collected into one fund and administered properly by representatives of those various institutions and organisations. That in itself, when they remembered how many of those institutions and associations there had been, would mean a considerable saving, and it would mean that administrative expenses would be reduced to the absolute minimum.

Breaking Monotony

He was glad to think that the library took its share of the subscriptions that went to the central fund. No one to-day would make a claim that might have been made years ago that the proper people to look after those who suffered from blindness should be their own people and their families. It was a matter that could not be dealt with in the home and in the home alone. After all, it was difficult for them to put themselves, even in imagination, in the position of the blind. But it was easy to see that if there was one thing more than another that was necessary for their health and salvation it was that occupation should be found for the mind. That was almost impossible in circumstances of poverty, and no doubt many of them who were older could remember in country places in remote regions the pitiable position of the blind, to whom nothing was left but to sit in a corner of a cottage all day with nothing to do for the mind or the fingers. The subscriptions which people now gave helped to bring both to head and to hand what was necessary to break that monotony and to bring an interest into life. It was evident, however,

that even workshops for the blind could not be expected to pay their way.

The Braille System

Therefore, even for workshops, financial aid was essential, and they knew that whatever money they subscribed to an object of that kind was bringing light to the blind and dispelling loneliness. With regard to reading, it was of happy augury that they were met on the date of the centenary of the perfecting of the Braille system. They could hardly exaggerate the services of the Braille library in London. A quarter of a million volumes a year at present were being issued, and there was no reason why those figures should not be exceeded. A generation ago if a blind person wanted to read he could get sympathetic tracts. To-day he could choose almost anything from Kant's "Kritik of Pure Reason" to a novel by Charles Garvice; and within that definition there would be pasturage for most people. They all had friends among the blind, and one reason why they wanted to do something for them was their admiration for that amazing cheerfulness that always seemed characteristic of blind people. It was because of the spirit with which those people met their affliction, just as much as for the affliction itself, that he asked them to help them that day. No fund better deserved their support, and there was no worthier or higher object in this country. (Cheers).

A Serious Loss

Mr. A. P. Herbert, of *Punch*, supporting the appeal, said the loss of sight was about the only affliction about which we were never funny. No one had made a reputation by making jokes about the blind. He was informed that Mr. Baldwin had undertaken to give up smoking unless their subscriptions that day reached a certain figure—a record. He therefore hoped that their generosity would be such that the Lord Mayor would be able to turn to Mr. Baldwin and say: "You may smoke." (Laughter).

Vast Amount of Kindness

Captain Sir Beachcroft Towse, V.C., said there was a vast amount of kindness and sympathy in the world, but that would not keep the wolf from the door. He proposed a vote of thanks to the Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress and other speakers.

Increase in Adult Blindness

Dr. P. M. Evans, in the absence, through illness, of the Chairman of the Committee,

Mr. Ormond Blyth, who, he said, was making splendid progress, seconded the motion. In 1921, he said, there were 25,820 on the register of unemployed blind, and in 1929 the number was 52,727. That increase might be partly accounted for by better registration. There was, however, an enormous increase of blindness among those who had gone blind later in life.

Support of the Boroughs and Urban Councils

Among those present at the Meeting were the Mayors of Bermondsey, Bethnal Green, Camberwell, Ealing, Finsbury, Holborn, Lambeth, Lewisham, Richmond, St. Pancras and the Deputy Mayor of Ilford; the Chairmen of the Urban District Councils of Bexley, Epping, Feltham, Hayes, Leatherhead, Merton and Morden, Sidcup, Southall, Norwood, Southgate, Surbiton, Walton-upon-Thames; Sir George Hume, Sir Michael and Lady O'Dwyer, Sir Richard and Lady Muriel Paget, Dame Jessie Wilton Phipps, Lady Sharp, Sir Henry and Lady Barton, Viscountess Dupplin, Lady Chalmers, Sir Patrick Fagan, Lady Fulton, Lady Higgins, Dame Madge Kendal.

THE CONTENT OF THE BLIND

"WE realize what the perpetual darkness must be to people who cannot see the beauty of nature and the colour of flowers. But I think blind people look upon the world with a greater joy and contentment than those with normal sight, because they have learned contentment through being able to help themselves and by their aptitude to make their lives happy."—*The Countess of Malmesbury*.

A FAMOUS BLIND ORGANIST

"HOLLINS has played upon all the most important organs in the world and is perhaps the greatest living improviser we have. His skill at the organ is almost uncanny. He will sit down to a huge organ of 60 or 70 stops and in a very short time he has mastered the position of everything, however complicated the mechanism may be. He has a most astounding memory and never seems to forget an instrument he has ever played on. He once gave a recital on a small organ which, twenty-five years later, was rebuilt. He was asked to play again, and after running over the stops he said 'what have you done with that nice old clarinet stop you had on the Choir?'"—*T. Henderson, Mus.Bac.*

NEW METHOD OF REPRODUCING SOUND.

Audible Record of the Bible to be prepared.

CAPTAIN Sir Beachcroft Towse, V.C., K.C.V.O., C.B.E., Chairman of the National Institute for the Blind, and Mr. Henry J. Wagg, a member of the Institute's Council and Technical Research Committee, attended last month a demonstration in the Blattner Film Studios at Elstree, of the Stille method of recording and reproducing sound and speech. They were much impressed by the demonstration.

According to the Film Correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, the Stille method, which is of German origin, though intended primarily for the production of talking pictures, appears to be capable of many adaptations.

A duo of violin and piano played in the studio in front of a microphone was reproduced perfectly within a minute or so after the violinist put down his bow. The tone of the reproduction, moreover, seemed to some of those present almost sweeter than the original. Then Henry Ainley, the well-known actor, seated himself near the microphone and recited one of Shakespeare's sonnets. He had barely finished before the words were repeated with startling clarity.

Compared with some of the other systems, continues the *Telegraph's* correspondent, the

Stille seems astonishingly simple. Sound is recorded, not on the film, but on steel wire of very small calibre or on narrow steel "tape." The former is employed when it is required to reproduce sound or speech only.

The method by which the sound is registered is a triumph of ingenuity. Acoustic vibrations are converted by the microphone on which they impinge into electric vibrations, and these, in turn, are conducted into the cells of small electro-magnets, past the cores of which "tape" moves at a uniform speed. As it moves, the electric vibrations are recorded and fixed upon it, though quite invisible, of course, to the eye.

If the wire or tape thus magnetised be now passed through the core of other electro-magnets, the invisible records give rise to currents of varying intensity, which are conveyed to the loud speaker or telephone diaphragms, and reconverted into sound.

By this means a whole volume may be recorded on a reel of wire costing a few shillings and reproduced at will by means of suitable apparatus. Mr. Ainley announced that he has arranged to make at once an audible record of the Bible, and to follow this up by other books.



AT "SUNSHINE HOUSE," SOUTHPORT, ONE OF THE BLIND BABIES' HOMES OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE, THE BABIES HAVE THE SANDS AND THE SEA ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

The BEACON

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE
INTERESTS OF THE BLIND

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THE NEW "BEACON"



NEXT month—January, 1930—the "Beacon" will appear in a new form. It is hoped that the change in size, style and character will be welcomed by our present subscribers and will induce others to subscribe, as the cause of the change is the desire to make the magazine of more practical use to everyone connected in any way with the welfare of the blind.

The first number of the "Beacon" was published in January, 1917—thirteen years ago—as a continuance of the "Braille Review," which in the previous month had completed its fourteenth volume. The change was then described as "a new milestone in the history of the National Institute for the Blind."

This description we can adapt to-day, but the adaptation is important. We hope that the new "Beacon" will eventually prove to be a further milestone in the history not only of the National Institute but of the blind throughout the world.

Almost every important social movement of to-day has acquired its importance by adopting as its fundamental principle the spirit of co-operation. In the blind world all our readers know that the effect of co-operation has been most marked during recent years, and we believe that progress in all branches of work for the blind is accelerated every day by the spirit of concord and of combined effort which is surely now vitally present in every nation.

The new "Beacon" has an ambitious task before it. By extending its scope and widening its outlook, it will aim to help in all possible ways the endeavours of people who are working for the amelioration of the blind throughout the world. It may be able to achieve little at first, but we trust that with the active support of all who have recognized and partaken in the growth of the spirit of co-operation during the past few years, the "Beacon" may truly become a forum where the tasks before us may be reviewed and discussed in friendliness and helpfulness.

An outline of our future Editorial policy will appear in the first issue of the new "Beacon" which, with successive issues, will be published on the 15th of the month.

THE EDITOR.

WELFARE OF BLIND IN SCOTLAND

The following Circular has been issued by the Department of Health for Scotland:—

Public Assistance

Circular No. 3.

EDINBURGH, 11th November, 1929.

SIR,

Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1929. Welfare of the Blind.

1. I am directed to refer to the provisions of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1929, affecting the functions of local authorities under the Blind Persons' Act, 1920, and the Wireless Telegraphy (Blind Persons Facilities) Act, 1926 (hereinafter referred to as the Blind Persons' Acts).

2. The Act of 1929 makes the following changes in the local authorities charged with the administration of the Blind Persons Acts. By virtue of Section 2, which transfers to and vests in county councils the functions of town councils of small burghs within the county as local authorities for the purposes of these Acts, the town councils of the burghs of Rothesay, Alloa, Elgin, Brechin, Forfar, Montrose, Johnstone, Renfrew, Harwick, Galashiels, and Lerwick, will cease to be local authorities for the purposes of these Acts as from 16th May, 1930, and their functions will, as from that date, be transferred to and vest in the county councils of the counties within which these burghs are respectively situated.

Section 10 (7) combines, for the purposes of the above Acts:—

(1) The county of Kinross with the county of Perth; and

(2) The county of Nairn with the county of Moray;

and provides that the reconstituted county councils of each combination shall form a joint county council for the combined county. The burgh of Elgin will, as above indicated, be included in the combined county of Nairn and Moray.

3. Under Section 11 (5) a county council or joint county council shall be deemed to have entered into any combination for the purposes of the Blind Persons Act, 1920, in which any transfer of authority within its area is included immediately before the transfer of functions takes place. The subsection also makes provision for any such county council or joint county council withdrawing from the combination within two years after 15th May, 1930.

Councils affected by the provisions of the subsection should take into consideration whether, for the most effective administration of matters relating to the blind within their areas, they should continue in any such combinations or withdraw therefrom either under the terms of the combination agreement or the provisions of Section 11 (5).

4. Section 14 (4) empowers local authorities to provide in their administrative schemes that, *inter alia*, any provision for blind persons which might be made either under the Poor Law Acts or under the Blind Persons' Act, 1920, shall, in future, be made under the Blind Persons Act, 1920. Local authorities are referred to what has already been stated in regard to this power as affecting assistance to the blind in Public Assistance Circulars No. 1 (paragraphs 16-19) and No. 2 (paragraphs 10-13) issued by the Department on 23rd September, 1929.

5. In terms of Section 52, grants for the welfare of the blind will cease to be payable in respect of any period after 15th May, 1930, and the amount of such grants for the standard year, including the grants paid to voluntary associations for the blind, will thereafter be merged in the general exchequer contribution and distributed to local authorities as provided for under Part III of the Act. In this connection reference is made to the provisions of Section 71 (2) of the Act.

The income of voluntary associations is at present derived from voluntary sources together with contributions from local authorities and Government grants. The discontinuance of the direct payment of Government grants to voluntary associations will mean a loss of £16,000 or thereby in the income of these associations, who will, no doubt, expect Local Authorities to make good the loss and so avoid any impairment of their activities.

The Department take the view that, so far as services for the welfare of the blind are concerned, the power given to them by Section 68 to pay part of the general exchequer contribution direct to voluntary associations should be exercised only in respect of national services provided by these associations, *e.g.*, the production of literature in embossed type.

It is suggested, therefore, that the required adjustment in the contributions to be made to

voluntary associations should be made after negotiation between the local authorities and voluntary associations concerned, and that consideration should, at the same time, be given to any necessary amendment of the provisions of the schemes under Section 2 of the Blind Persons Act, 1920, relating to contributions to voluntary associations.

6. The Department are given power by Section 64 to make a scheme, if they think proper, providing for the payment by local authorities of contributions of such amounts as may be stated in the scheme to any voluntary association which carries on services for the benefit of the blind resident in the area of the local authority. It is hoped, however, that local authorities and voluntary associations may be able mutually to agree as to the amounts of contributions, so as to render it unnecessary for the Department to make any scheme under Section 64.

7. The Public Assistance Committee of the local authority at once suggests itself as the most appropriate committee to deal with the functions under the Blind Persons Acts (other than those relating to education and raising of money by rate or loan) in the case of county councils and town councils that are not members of combinations under the Blind Persons Act, 1920. It is for consideration whether for the effective administration of matters affecting the blind the Public Assistance Committee should not appoint a Sub-Committee including members of the Public Health Committee and of the Education Committee, together with co-opted members being persons specially qualified by training and experience in matters relating to the blind. In cases where the local authority are not the Education Authority, the local authority representatives on the County Council Education Committee, or some of them, might be appointed to the Sub-Committee.

In the case of combinations of local authorities for the purposes of the Blind Persons Act, 1920, local authorities will probably decide to continue to carry out their functions through the Joint Committee for these purposes.

8. The Department have remitted to the Scottish Advisory Committee on the Welfare of the Blind to prepare, for their consideration, a revised model scheme under Section 2 of the Blind Persons Act, 1920, based on the results of the inquiry at present being made by the Advisory Committee into the working of approved schemes under that section and

on the effects on such schemes of the provisions of the Local Government Act of 1929. The Department, after considering the Advisory Committee's recommendations, will issue a revised model scheme as early as possible for the information of those county councils that may have to prepare fresh schemes owing to the extension of their area to include burghs not formerly embraced in the county for the purposes of the Blind Persons Act, 1920. The revised model scheme will be issued to all local authorities for the purposes of the Blind Persons Act, 1920.

9. Additional copies of this circular may be obtained through any bookseller or from H.M. Stationery Office, 120 George Street, Edinburgh, price 1d. (post free, 1½d.).

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

JOHN JEFFERY,

Secretary.



COMPENSATIONS OF BLINDNESS

BLINDNESS, like other disabilities, affords an admirable instance of the compensatory adaptability of the animal organism, says the *Medical Press*. This is notably displayed by the enhanced sensitiveness of touch, muscle-sense, and hearing in the blind. The exquisite sensibility of the muscle-sense is shown by those who can sit down and play with the utmost ease elaborate musical compositions without looking at the notes. This faculty is well shown in the blind, bereft as they are of the help afforded by vision in guiding their hands: they have to rely entirely on touch, and, even more, on muscle-sense. Imagine the delicacy of a sense which enables the player rapidly to move the hands up and down the piano, sometimes jumping over several octaves, and to strike the exact notes required without seeing them. Intellectually the muscle-sense—the capacity to estimate position and resistance—ranks next to hearing and sight, and it has ranked high in the evolution of the mind.

It is to be noted that the muscle- and touch-sense function in intimate association, and that what is popularly known as the "tactile sense" includes the muscle-sense; for in feeling an object, not only are the hands and fingers moved along its surface, but varying degrees of pressure are employed. In this way, size, shape, consistence (solidity, hardness, softness, liquidity), smoothness and roughness, are ascertained.

"THE VENTURE"

A NEW BRAILLE MAGAZINE FOR SCOUTS AND GUIDES

By W. J. M.



ON November 23rd, 1927, a conference was held at the Scouts' Imperial Headquarters on the subject of scouting in special troops, such as those for cripples, the deaf and dumb, and the blind. As a result, special committees were formed to deal with each branch, including one for blind scouts. It was, perhaps, at this conference that the germ of the idea of a Braille Magazine for Scouts and Guides was developed. Little further, however, was heard of it at this time as the publication in Braille of *Scouting for Boys* was more to the fore in our attention just then. Negotiations, nevertheless, were proceeding during 1928 and the summer of 1929. These were initiated by the Girl Guides' Extension Branch, support being promised by the Scouts' Headquarters' Special Tests Branch. The whole matter was eventually successfully cleared up. Miss Jean Robinson, a blind Guider, agreed to act as Editor of the Guide side of the Magazine, and Mr. W. J. Merridan, Scoutmaster of the 28th Croydon (Royal Normal College for the Blind) Troop, as Editor of the Scout side.

Financial Difficulties Solved.

The financial aspect of the question presented the chief problem to be solved. Such a magazine obviously cannot be run on a profit basis; indeed, it can only be run at a heavy loss to the producers if the income from the sale of copies is to be the only source of revenue. It is, therefore, only due to the generosity and co-operation of the National Institute for the Blind, who have agreed to defray half the cost of production, while the Scouts' and Guides' Association share the rest, that the publication has finally been made possible.

As to the magazine itself, it is the desire of the Editors to make it as attractive as possible to those for whom it is intended. About a third of its pages will be devoted to Scout matters, a third to Guides, and the remainder to items of general interest. Rangers and Rovers, Brownies and Cubs, the big and little sisters and brothers of the Guides and Scouts, will not be forgotten, although it is going to

tax the ingenuity of the Editors to manage to compress everything into the space of 24 pages.

Our first number will appear on January 15th of next year, 1930. We had hoped to be able to publish it before Christmas, but difficulties in connection with printing, and the idea of starting our new *Venture* with the New Year, decided us to postpone publication till then.

Features of First Number.

We have been able to secure messages from the Chief Scout, the Chief Guide, Sir Montagu Burrows (Headquarters' Commissioner for Special Tests), and Mrs. Claude Fryer (Head of the Guides' Extension Movement). In addition, our first number will contain a poem by Alfred Noyes, the first of a series of articles on the British National Flag, interesting and amusing accounts of the Jamboree by the Blind Contingent, articles on various scouting and guiding activities, and as a special supplement, a diagram illustrating the growth and composition of the Union Jack.

It is the Editors' hope, however, that a great part of future issues will be contributed by our readers themselves. We want them to take an active part in the production of the Magazine, and to send in articles or stories about their scouting adventures, fun at school, and other activities. Those who not feel themselves capable of writing in this way can at least write and let the Editors know what they would like, and what they think of the articles and stories provided. The Editors are only too willing to receive fresh ideas.

Monthly News Item Wanted.

We are particularly keen to have news from the various troops and companies. We want to keep in touch because we are really a big family, scattered over the country, and we like to know of each other's doings. This section should form a valuable medium for the exchange of ideas as to methods adapted to our special needs, games, displays, and so on. We also like to know of each other's successes, badges earned, and tests passed.

We shall have a competition in the first issue, with prizes for the successful competitors.

If the good wishes of our many friends to whom we have broached the subject of our

Venture can ensure success, then we shall undoubtedly forge ahead in fine style. I have only space to quote from a few of these well-wishers.

The Chief Scout: "I send my best wishes for the success of the new *Venture*, and hope that the magazine will have a long and successful career." The Chief Guide sends greetings to the Guides through their own journal, and wishes it and them all success. Sir Montagu Burrows (Headquarters' Commissioner for Special Tests): "I wish the *Venture* a most prosperous voyage." Mrs. Claude Fryer (Guides' Extension Movement): "May the *Venture* venture many times, and bring happiness and interest to you all." Mr. Edward Evans, Editor of the *School Magazine*: "I think it is a fine idea, and I wish it every success." Mr. H. James, 8th Stretford Group, Manchester: "High luck to the *Venture*." Miss Ruth Knowles, Skipper of the *Friend Ship*: "I sincerely welcome this sporting

project of yours. I will be very pleased to do all I can to help you with it, and will be glad to let you use any matter you care to out of our magazine. Good luck to the *Venture*."

In conclusion, may I say that the Editors will be pleased to hear from anyone interested, and to receive suggestions or contributions for publication. Their addresses are as follows:—Hon. Editor (Scout Section): Mr. W. J. Merridan, Royal Normal College for the Blind, Upper Norwood, S.E. 19; Hon. Editor (Guide Section): Miss Jean Robinson, Milestones, Old Woking Road, West Byfleet, Surrey.

The magazine will be printed and published by the National Institute for the Blind, and all annual subscriptions, orders for single copies, etc., should be addressed to the Institute at 224, Great Portland Street. The Annual Subscription is 1s. 6d. post free; single copies, 1½d. post free.



ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BLIND

Further Successes of Mr. T. H. Tylor

IN the BEACON for August, 1927, we published an account of the career of Mr. T. H. Tylor, M.A., B.C.L. We now have pleasure in adding a few notes on his academic successes since the time when that account was compiled.

In October, 1928, Mr. Tylor sat for the Bar Final Examination and was placed in Class I, being awarded a prize of £50 by his Inn, the Inner Temple to the bar of which he was "called" on the sponsorship of Viscount Sumner of Ibbstone, the most famous of Balliol judges.

In Trinity Term, 1928, four of his Balliol pupils obtained "Firsts," a record for any College in one year in the Law School.

In Michaelmas Term, 1929, he was elected to an Official Fellowship at Balliol and thus joins the governing body of his own College.

In the same term he was appointed a Public Examiner and obtained the approval of a method of conducting his duties from the Vice-Chancellor and Proctors which will enable even a totally blind examiner to officiate in future.

We believe that both the Fellowship and Public Examinations nominations are original precedents for anyone partially blind from birth.

In connection with the work of the National Institute, he was appointed their representative on the Uniform Type Committee and also to the new board of Governors of Chorley Wood.

On completing his Bar examinations he again took up Chess and came out second to Yates, the British Champion at the Worcester Tournament, Christmas, 1928; was selected to represent England in the Ramsgate Masters' Tournament, Easter, 1929, and tied for Third in the British Team, having drawn with Capablanca; and tied for Fourth in the British Championship, 1929. He hopes to participate in all important English tournaments in future.

We congratulate Mr. Tylor on this most distinguished record.

Blind Pianist Praised

Few afflictions excite more immediate sympathy than blindness, says the *Referee*, and the achievements of those who triumph over this disadvantage always seem to approach the wonderful. It was so as one listened to the sureness and accuracy of Mr. Thomas Marshall's pianoforte playing at his recital at the Æolian Hall. On the other hand, it seemed natural that his readings should indicate that he lived in an imaginative land, peculiarly of his own conception. Thus his interpretations, while following tradition, had a distinctive character that endowed them with freshness.

WORK FOR THE BLIND IN FOREIGN LANDS

THE beneficent work of the Braille Missionary Union is increasingly spreading, and its value as a provider of free Braille Scriptures and other gospel literature, and a supporter of blind teachers and pupils is being appreciated in many new fields. So we hear with pleasure from time to time of one and another of those so sorely handicapped, not only by their infirmity, but also by their painful surroundings, developing under guidance and training gracious talents that would otherwise lie dormant and useless.

Teaching Train up the Nile.

In Egypt, for instance, starting from Gindi Effendi in Cairo, a train is laid at distances of a hundred miles, in five Coptic centres, up the Nile, of blind young men, who reach and teach other blind to the number perhaps of three hundred; and at long last a beginning has been made for shut-away Egyptian women, Gindi himself teaching a class of blind girls in the C.M.S. High School. Also, under the Egypt General Mission, an evangelist in the Nile Delta is teaching a girl to read Braille, in addition to evangelistic work at a dispensary and elsewhere. This work among blind women has been eagerly desired for years in that land, and much is hoped for from this small beginning.

In Abyssinia, in N. Rhodesia, in French West Africa, and again in Brazil and Argentina, many scattered blind are being reached; and as their numbers increase, more and more copies of Scriptures and primers are being called for in all their different languages.

Cheap Stereotyping Introduced.

A new, and comparatively cheap stereotyping process has been introduced, worked by voluntary helpers. By it the number of copies needed can be made to the great advantage of those centres where the readers are more numerous, as in Egypt, and among the Armenian refugees in Syria, with their pathetic little blind school at Aleppo, and the industrial orphanage at Ghazir on the Lebanon.

The B.M.U. has links with Korea, Malaya, Eritrea, Aden, and British Guiana, Canada, and Newfoundland and the South African Library has had many of its books, when its own small lending library at home has had a copy. Japan

has had many similar books which circulate from Osaka and Kobe. This is in the sphere of work of the "Guild of the Blind that believe in Christ." Then the Braille Literature Association of China is publishing the "Pilgrim's Progress" in Mandarin, prepared under the B.M.U., and it is now developing strongly. And a teacher is sought for the Blind of Palestine, fairly estimated to number 5 per cent. of the population.

South India is a comparatively new field, where a promising development is taking place, in one or two languages. The Rev. A. B. Elliott is co-operating in the production of N.T. Scriptures in Telugu; Mr. Bird of Madras has many appeals for Malayalam books in a Code they can use. Books in Marathi Colloquial would be much appreciated. As an example of the use made of the funds, in this part of India, a £6 scholarship is provided for a Telugu girl at school; £35 has been sent to commence work that may be found possible in Telugu and Malayalam; and £24 is regularly given for two blind Biblewomen who go out with the Marathi preaching bands.

Great Help of Voluntary Workers.

The fact that all the work of this Union—Brailing, stereotyping, binding and the printing of its news—is done by voluntary workers, and almost the only home expenses being for materials and postage, enables the B.M.U. to use to the greatest advantage the funds committed to its charge. With the steady increase of demands from all parts, an equally steady inflow of subscriptions is needed, and all the publicity that friends can give is highly valued.

Interesting details of the work are perforce omitted in this hasty sketch, but application to the Hon. Gen. Secretary would be welcomed, and further information gladly given.

Hon. Gen. Secretary and Treasurer, Lt.-Col. Ayerst, Westbury-sub-Mendip, Somerset.

Hon. Secretary, Copyists' League, Miss C. Frost, 1, King's Road, Clevedon, Somerset.



Scholarship at Worcester

Ronald Mason, a pupil of Linden Lodge Residential School for the Blind, Battersea, has been awarded a special scholarship, tenable at the Royal Worcester College for the Blind.

REPORTS FROM THE INSTITUTIONS

The East Sussex Association for the Blind

THE number of persons on the register at the end of March, 1929, was 349. The Report states that during the year 1,859 visits were paid by the two home teachers. In the East Sussex area there are now seventeen home workers, two blind copyists who work for the National Library for the Blind, and a highly trained masseuse. A valuable supporter has been lost by the death of Mr. Herbert Mews, who had been a member of the Association from its inauguration, and Chairman of the General Case Committee since its foundation.

Workshop for the Blind of Kent

Of the several considerable advances made during the year, perhaps the most important is the purchase and adaptation of extra premises, *viz.*, a part of the old Roan Boys' School in Eastney Street, where the new work is carried on under much improved conditions of light, air and quietude provided by large airy work-rooms, an extensive messroom and ample space for storage purposes. The Appeals' Committee reported that during the year £458 13s. 10d. was handed over to the Workshop. Of this amount £295 1s. 10d. was the net result of the "Tudor Revels" Pageant and Sale of Work held at "Fairfax House" in June. Subscriptions and donations amount to £121 9s. 7d.

Hertfordshire Society for the Blind

The Report states that "This year we have made good our proud boast that we could, by voluntary means, raise enough money for the needs of our own blind and have a good sum over for the Blind Societies which carry on national work." Though the number of blind in the County is considerably more, there are 422 blind persons on the register. The Society is deeply indebted to its 106 Honorary Representatives. The home teachers have paid 1,889 visits, as well as 965 visits for lessons. Geranium Day was held for the first time in 1928-29, and again this year, with considerable success. Important work has been done in the formation of further Sub-Committees; these are for two purposes, (1) Money-Raising, (2) the Social Welfare of the Blind.

Coventry Society for the Blind

The number of registered blind on the 31st March was 127, an increase of twenty-five on the previous year; this is attributable to the extension of the City boundary, which dates from 1st April, 1928. There are twelve home teachers under the supervision of the Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind, including a teacher of music who has Diplomas for pianoforte, singing and elocution. The services of the Library have been much appreciated during the year, and 868 volumes, representing 231 complete works of diverse types, have been issued. Grants amounting to £907 16s. 6d. have been made to the necessitous blind, and various other services, including artificial dentures and a supply of tea to enable a man to start a tea agency, have been rendered.

Preston Industrial Institute for the Blind and Home for Blind Children in North and East Lancs.

The Report states that the work of the Institution has been very satisfactory, and would have been even more satisfactory but for the bad trade in the cotton mills which has made the Skip Department short of orders during the year. A splendid play-field has been bought near the Home from a Fund left by the late John Alfred Clayton. Three legacies have been received by the Council amounting to £544. Some interesting figures are given showing the comparison and development of the work since 1923. In that year there were no trainees; there are now twenty-three. There were twenty-eight adult trained workers; there are now thirty-seven. In 1923 there was one home visitor only; at the present time there were four. They had no Home Workers' Scheme at the former date, and now eleven trained workers were included in the Scheme. The Hostel for Trainees was not opened until 1926; there were now seventeen resident. In 1923 the sales of the Workshop were £1,884; last year the figure was £3,967. The number of registered blind in the area in 1923 was 297; the number now was 481. The last figure does not mean that the number of blind in the area had increased, but simply that more had been discovered as a consequence of the home visiting scheme.

The Council had had a great loss by the death of Alderman Walker on the 7th July, 1929. He had represented the Lancaster area on the Council, and "being blind himself, he realised perhaps more than any of them the real needs and feelings of the blind."

Royal Midland Institution for the Blind for the Counties of Nottingham, Derby and Lincoln

The number of blind persons directly connected with the Institution is 169, of which number eighty-one are workers and eighty-eight are pupils. Of the twenty-nine who have passed out of the Schools, only six have been withdrawn on account of their inability to learn some useful and remunerative employment—a very satisfactory result when it is remembered that many pupils, when they are admitted, suffer from the drawback of health-weakness as well as blindness. In addition to those who are closely associated with the Institution, nearly 1,400 blind persons resident in the counties served by it are regularly visited, 9,500 visits being made during the year.

A recent feature of the Institution's welfare work is the establishment of social centres for the blind. Seven of these are now in operation in the districts covered by the Institution, and others are in course of formation. In Nottingham there are 416 blind outside the Institution. Their place of meeting is at present in the Institution buildings, but it is a question whether one of the Committee's next movements may not take the shape of the establishment of permanent quarters elsewhere.

Grants are in all £1,815 13s. 6d. in excess of last year's allowances, and as they are only made for what is actually done, and the help rendered—it shows how much the Institution's work in these departments has increased. Owing to the fluctuation in prices, the Shop and Institution sales suffered a loss of £1,000. The number of permanent blind journeyman workers has been increased by three since the last Report. The wages paid to these sixty-eight blind men and women amounted to £4,474 14s. 3d., and the augmentation grants made to them, partly from Government and partly by the Institution itself, were £2,812 19s. 10d.

The Report gives plenty of evidence that much progress has been made during the Institution's eighty-fifth year of existence.

Rhondda Institution for the Blind

Only by a very successful sales' campaign during the year was it found possible to keep the Institution open and the blind employees fully employed. It has been decided to begin Coal-Bag-making, while Brushmaking will also be commenced and Weaving is under consideration. The number of baskets, chairs, mats and knitted goods made last year was 10,375, while the number of these articles sold amounted to 10,341,—a most successful result. Good work was done in the production of matting and the re-seating of chairs. There has been an increase of forty-three blind persons on the register during the year, making a total of 420.

St. Helen's and District Society for the Welfare of the Blind

The most outstanding feature in the year's activities was the opening, on the 31st January, 1929, of the Society's new Workshop, Offices and Social Centre in Boundary Road, St. Helen's. The premises are approved by the Ministry of Health as a workshop for forty persons for concerts, etc., and seventy for dancing. These premises have been erected and equipped at a cost of £4,500, and while most of the money has been raised, there still remains a debt of £500. Another improvement took place on the 1st April, 1929, when the necessitous blind received a minimum income of £1 a week instead of 15s.

Twenty years ago there were but twenty-four blind persons known to St. Helen's and District, insufficiently provided for and with no scheme to assist them. To-day all is changed; 194 blind persons are being dealt with, and at their disposal is a recognised organisation at the back of which are the resources of the local authorities, the Ministry of Health and the general public.

Hull and East Riding Institute for the Blind

The Report is roughly in two sections, the first dealing with the welfare side, which refers chiefly to the outside blind or those not capable of working, and the second, the "Workshops" section, embracing the blind who are working or being trained. The number of blind on the register for Hull at the end of the year was 536, and for East Riding, 175. At the Beech Holme Workshops 117 blind workers are employed. The three home teachers for Hull and the one for the

whole of the East Riding have paid 16,214 visits, and between them have given 182 lessons—a most creditable year's work. The work of visiting the blind in their own homes is felt to be most important, and the Committee have accordingly secured a band of voluntary men and women who visit the blind weekly. It is hoped that, owing to the heavy strain imposed by the large number of visits to be paid, another home teacher will be engaged for Hull.

A marked feature of the Report is the amount of work done, and the interest shown, by voluntary workers. At the Rockliffe Home, where there are eight blind women, every afternoon someone goes to read to them or play the gramophone. It has now been found possible to keep the Social Club for Blind Men open all day instead of only in the morning. The Hull Voluntary Workers' Committee have raised £277 for the benefit of the blind.

The work of the Institute has gone on in a satisfactory manner throughout the year, and the welfare of the blind of Hull and the East Riding has not only been maintained at a high level, but a gradual improvement has, and is, taking place.



INTERNATIONAL NOTES

Braille Institute of America, Inc.

TO satisfy the great hunger which blind and partially blind people—many of them of the highest intellectual capabilities—feel for good literature of all kinds, the Braille Institute of America, Inc., has been organised under the laws of California, and will soon place in libraries and clubs throughout the country a wide range of reading matter.

The new organisation is nation-wide, non-profit making, non-sectarian, and under the control of men and women who have devoted their lives to lightening the paths of the blind. The signatures of 27 eminent California citizens appear as charter members. The following persons constitute the board of trustees, of which Gesner Williams, attorney, is Chairman: John C. Porter, Robert A. Odell, Frank Meline, A. L. Sonderegger, W. H. Kindig, Luther T. Mayo, Alma W. Meline, and Anna D. Clise.

The new organisation proposes to raise a permanent annual endowment of 75,000 dollars a year for the publication of literature for the

blind, distributed to them free, and to libraries and institutions conducting departments of books for the blind, on the basis of enrolled borrowers. That the organisation's activities may be truly nation-wide, and the literature issued of a standard and variety truly serviceable to all classes of blind people, honorary memberships will be conferred upon librarians and assistant librarians of all institutions or libraries conducting loan departments of books for the blind.

It is further provided that this group of librarians shall constitute a committee on publication. It is proposed also that the librarians shall record the aggregate number of Braille borrowers enrolled at all the libraries. The annual quota of books received freely by each library will then be determined on a *pro rata* basis, thus insuring equality in the distribution of books.

"The Braille Institute of America," its president, Mr. Williams, said, "is an outgrowth of a long recognised need for such an organisation of librarians and official workers for the blind throughout the nation. There are about 100,000 blind people in the United States, of whom only about 15,000 or 20,000 have learned to read the Braille system. The scarcity, as well as the character of literature published for the blind, is largely responsible for this condition, offering little inducement to the learner. Statistics show that 90 per cent. of this number have lost their sight after reaching maturity. Since the only federal appropriation to aid in furnishing literature in behalf of the blind must be used exclusively to supply textbooks and apparatus to the various institutions for the education of the blind in the United States and its territories, only 10 per cent. of our blind population benefit thereby.

"With scarcely more than 15 libraries in the United States which conduct loan departments of books for the blind; with 90,000 of our blind population not benefiting by any appropriation; and all the 15 libraries not having sufficient funds to furnish more than one copy of a single title which must serve hundreds of borrowers; and with not even an adequate dictionary in print in the Braille system for use by blind students in our many tax-supported schools—the establishment of a sound, nation-wide organisation devoted to furnishing relief in this field of unfortunate humanity is indeed timely."

THE BLIND MAN'S GARDEN

HOW TO MAKE IT

By Frank Eyre



ONCE overheard a neighbour say to a man who was sawing logs in the next garden, "Excuse me, I always hate giving advice, I'm such a fool myself . . . but you're using your sawing-horse upside down." It is with a similar diffidence that I comply with a request to write of my experience in the laying out of land. I am no expert.

It happened that I developed a liking for amateur gardening when I possessed normal sight. I continued to till a garden during eight years of slowly diminishing vision, and have carried on even more vigorously since becoming a "total."

In making a garden, as in all things, the first essential is to know what you want. Little progress will be made by taking a spade in one hand, finding your way on to the land and scratching your head with the other hand to provoke an inspiration as to where to begin. The shape and size of the plot, its aspects and a knowledge of its supplies of sunshine and shade must be clearly in mind. Then, having decided what is to be grown and where, whether flowers, fruit, or kitchen stuff, a hopeful start can be made.

The First Processes.

My piece of ground was more or less level. I evolved my plan and then, with a spade, a "five speen" fork and a garden line I got busy. The first process was to get the line set along what would eventually be one edge of a kitchen garden, and with that as a sort of anchorage there was little fear of losing myself in an acre of only partially enclosed country. Here I will venture on positive advice, and it is this; don't have long stumps to which to tie a line. I stooped suddenly once and crashed into the top of a stump. Having staunched the blood, provided another pair of black spectacles and substituting a shorter stump, I proceeded with my "trenching." This process is very simple as a theory but, believe me, if the thought of manual labour makes you "come over all of a tremble" you had better not undertake to make a garden! Soil that is not deeply tilled is relatively unproductive;

trenching is the only way to dig deep, and there is probably no harder work since slaves rowed the galleys. First a trench is taken out with the fork, then the loose soil is removed with the spade and again the fork gets to work removing another "spit." The process is then repeated, turning the soil removed from the second trench into the first trench and so on. Yes, and it is "the so on" that will send the digger tired to bed, give him a gigantic appetite and a noble thirst, and improve the girth of his biceps. The value of this deep digging is easily demonstrated. At the present moment I have a bed of spring cabbage that are twice the size of those of a neighbour who planted his out from the same seed bed at the same time on similar soil. It is simply because my land is deeply tilled.

Enlarging Each Season.

I have found it to be a good plan to enlarge my area of tillage little by little each season; that is, to have available just as much garden as I have been able to prepare in the time by the method I have described rather than to have a larger area inadequately dug.

At sowing time the blind gardener's good friend is the line that I have already referred to. At first I had my vexations—when, for instance, the line hitched on a stone and the rows of seeds describe a curve; or again when I changed the stump at one end and forgot to do so at the other, so that the parsnips appeared to a bird's eye view like the elevation of a five-barred gate with a diagonal cross piece. Experience soon gets over such little troubles however, and I am assured by observers that in early summer the rows of young growth are as geometrically correct as they should be in a kitchen garden.

Flowers and Fruits.

Such flowers as I attend to myself are in rows, too, and merely grown for cutting and not for effect. It may be possible for a blind man to plan and produce a successful herbaceous border with an attractive colour scheme; temperament and time must determine what can be undertaken. Small fruits such as gooseberries, strawberries, etc., have their place in my garden, while bush and half-standard apple

trees are planted in the grass land, each with a roundel five feet in diameter of broken ground left to conserve the moisture and to give air to the roots.

"Always Being Made."

Endeavour in life is the thing, and it is better to travel hopefully than to arrive. My garden is not made but is in process of being made; it will always be like that. The grass has to be content with one or two mowings a year and there are always more weeds than my conscience approves. But I live a day at a time and can claim to have delivered the goods. My kitchen is supplied the year through with every sort of vegetable in season or from store, besides having an appreciable surplus for disposal. The Guild of Blind Gardeners gives much encouragement and practical help in the form of discount on the purchase of seeds and by organising exhibits at some of the big Flower Shows, awarding prizes well worth winning.

I have referred to the hard work involved and it may well be asked if the return is substantial in proportion to the effort. A calculation would probably be disappointing to those who consider all things from the money point of view, but gardening has advantages for blind people that cannot be so measured. Healthy open air work, a job always at hand, the opportunity for the pleasures of reflection that are possible while plying the spade, and the satisfaction of directly producing acceptable things . . . these are matters that should count in the rightly constituted mind.

A Lurid Experience.

I set out to tell my experiences in laying out my land. There are few but humdrum tales for the telling. One lurid experience, however, was the erection of a post and wire fence, which I determined to do alone. Having set the boundary line it was a comparatively easy matter to dig holes two feet deep and erect the oak posts. Then the fun began. A coil of eight-gauge solid galvanised wire looks harmless enough. When it is loosed from its pristine stock form, however, it has all the properties of a super watchspring and a lot more. I leave your imagination to depict a blind man encircled, enwrapped and entwined in and with half a hundredweight of implacable, all-embracing coils whose destiny was to become horizontal and attached in four strands

by staples to the oak posts aforesaid. Yet I did the job without help, having to cut the wire but once. I am thankful that the wire was not magnetised and can never be run through one of those wonderful new gramophones to serve as a record of what it heard.



GAUZE VEILS FOR PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS

SOME years ago a workman in one of the Cardiff Dry Docks asked his wife to make him a gauze veil fastened to a circlet of elastic to protect the eyes when at work. We are informed by the Port Talbot Graving Dock and Shipbuilding Co., Ltd., South Wales, that these veils are now used in most of the Dry Docks in the Bristol Channel.

"In ship repairing," the General Manager says, "there is a lot of dirty work and a large amount of dust, scale and chippings to be contended with. The veils are largely used by our men when scraping and chipping rust and scale on steel ships, and also when chipping castings and forgings, and, in fact, in any process where there are flying particles or dust, for all of which we find them effective."

"The veils are soft and light, and therefore comfortable and cool, and so simple that anybody can make them. We buy them at 2s. per dozen, and being so cheap the men can discard them when they are dirty."

"We, of course, use coloured goggles for men working with the Oxy-Acetylene Plant and Electric Welding Plant, etc., and it may be that for heavy stone chipping the veils would not be sufficient security, but I think they would be very useful on buildings, works, cleaning down freestone, etc."



PERSONALIA

THE Principal of the Royal School for the Blind, Leatherhead, informs us that the Rt. Hon. Lord Eustace Percy, M.P., P.C., brother of the present Duke of Northumberland, has accepted the post of Chairman of the Corporation, in succession to the late Lord Southwark.

His Lordship was Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education in 1923, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health, 1924, and President of the Board of Education from 1925 until May, 1929. He was at one time in the Diplomatic Service, and is now M.P. for Hastings.

NEWS OF THE BLIND WORLD.

Memorial Service to Sir Arthur Pearson, Bt.

THIS Service will be held in the Lounge, St. Dunstan's, Inner Circle, Regent's Park, N.W. 1, on Monday, 9th December, at 6.15 p.m. The Rev. Prebendary E. N. Sharpe will conduct the Service, assisted by the Rev. J. Ernest Williams (Chaplains to St. Dunstan's). The Service will last about half-an-hour.

"Santa Lucia"

IT is with great regret that we learn that the Braille magazine *Santa Lucia*, owing to the death of Miss Hodgkin, one of the Editors, has been discontinued. The Misses Hodgkin did admirable pioneer work in the world of the blind, and their voluntary efforts paved the way to many developments which have helped towards an adequate supply of Braille periodical literature for the blind.

A Residential Club.

THE proposal to open a Residential Club for the Blind in the West End of London, which was announced recently in these columns, has, we regret to say, not been found practical. It was based on the tentative offer of a house, but examination of the project showed that the house in question could be used for the purpose only with the probability of a deficit much greater than could be justified. Discussion of the idea has, however, revealed a need for such a Club and it is hoped that some more practical plan will be produced.

The Esperanto Congress at Oxford.

THE Twenty-second International Esperanto Congress will take place next year from the 2nd to the 9th of August, at Oxford. Its headquarters will be the Town Hall, where there will be a special restaurant, post-office, bank, etc., with Esperantists in attendance. Sectional meetings will also be held in Christ's College. The programme will probably include lectures, a dance and other entertainments, and a whole-day excursion to places of interest.

Blind Esperantists will be granted special facilities, the Committee having already decided to issue the Congress ticket, which ordinarily costs one pound, free to blind members and their guides, and a fund is being raised to give free board and lodging during the Congress to those of them that desire it. It is expected

that not a few blind Esperantists will come from abroad, and offers of hospitality in London after the Congress would be most gratefully received.

All Correspondence relating to blind members should be addressed to W. P. Merrick, Penso, Shepperton.

Scotland and Blind Persons' Act

THE Scottish National Federation of Institutions and Societies for the Blind decided, at a meeting at Perth last month, to ask the Government to amend the Blind Persons' Act, 1920, in order to provide greater benefits for blind persons.

It was agreed to send a deputation to London to interview Mr. Philip Snowden, Chancellor of the Exchequer; Mr. Arthur Greenwood, Minister of Health; and Mr. William Adamson, Secretary of State for Scotland, on the question.

The Blind of Aberdeen

THE question of the amalgamation of the Aberdeen Asylum for the Blind and the Town and County Association for Teaching the Blind at their Homes, Aberdeen, was referred to at a meeting last month of the special committee appointed for the County of Aberdeen under the Blind Persons' Act. The clerk, Dr. W. Murison, explained that a remit had been made to prepare a draft scheme of amalgamation to include provisions for a new constitution. Mr. James Balfour, manager of the Aberdeen Asylum for the Blind, said they were going ahead with the scheme.

Annual Braille Reading Competition. Northern Branch, National Library.

THE Sixth Annual Braille Reading Competition held on Saturday, 16th November, 1929, at the Northern Branch of the National Library for the Blind, brought together a record number of 70 persons from the eight Northern counties of England taking part in the contest. The judges were Dr. Christine Arscott, Miss Conway, Miss Hughes, M.A., and Mrs. Jast. To Miss Jean Boag, of Carlisle, who, as last year's prize winner in Class I, was not eligible for a further prize, was awarded a certificate for her excellent rendering of "The Turkish Trench Dog" by Geoffrey Dearmer. Mr. A. V. Holt, of Liver-

pool, gained first prize in this class, whilst the second prize was divided between Mrs. Minall, of Blackburn and Miss H. Gothwaite of Mirfield. A passage of rhetoric from Burke tested their skill in reading prose, whilst "The Turkish Trench Dog" and "The Old Ships" by J. E. Fletcher, gave scope for their appreciation of poetry.

In Class II, where a passage from R. H. Mottram's "Ten Years Ago" and Kipling's "Way through the Wood" formed the selected pieces, Mr. Williams, of Wallasey, obtained first prize, and here again the second prize was divided—between Miss S. Birtwell, of Blackburn, and Mr. D. Holmes, of the Gresham Homes, Manchester.

Twenty-two competitors, ranging from 16 to 21 years, in Class III, read a selected passage from one of Addison's Essays and "Sherwood" by Alfred Noyes, and of these, Robert Hickson of Rochdale bore off the first prize, whilst Florence Jones, of Henshaw's Institution, Manchester, obtained the second prize. In the Junior division Wilfred Hickson, a brother of Class III's prizeman, was awarded first prize for his excellent interpretation of a passage from the "Little Flowers of St. Francis of Assisi" and his rendering of one of Robert Louis Stevenson's shorter poems. Gladys Powell, another pupil of Henshaw's Institution, came second.

After tea the prizes were presented by Lord Armstrong, and an address given by Mr. Stanley Jast, Chief Librarian of the City of Manchester. The evening passed enjoyably in the performance of three one-act plays by the Toc H. Players.



GREATER LONDON FUND FOR THE BLIND

THE principal event of the Autumn season was, as usual, the Hallowe'en Ball, which was held this year at Cricklewood Dance Hall as the Hammersmith Palais de Danse was not available. Owing to lack of accommodation,

the attendance was much smaller, but nevertheless, the event proved successful. Lady Fulton was present as Chairman of the Committee, many members of which attended with large parties. Mrs. Rigg Howard, Mlle. Malvina and their friends realised the financial success of the evening by selling most attractive mascots, buttonholes, and Draw tickets. The Draw itself was made by Miss Ivy Tresmand, Miss Frances Carson and Miss Flora le Breton presented prizes, and Miss Rita Page took the part of the "Lady of Hallowe'en" in the delightful ballet provided by the Misses Thorne and her pupils. Miss Josephine Bradley and Mr. Wellesley Smith gave an exhibition of the new Six-Eight and judged a competition; while Mr. John Hassall, assisted by ladies of the Committee, made the difficult choice of the prettiest dance frocks.

The concert season has opened more auspiciously than last year and by the end of October the artistes had given entertainments at Catford, Finsbury Park, Battersea, Harefield, Harringay, Hounslow, Dartford and Southall, in addition to providing the programme at the second concert this year of the enthusiastic Camberwell "Helpers of the Blind." At the last-named, the Mayor of Camberwell kindly presided and the speaker was Mr. Preece. The financial result, as usual, was very satisfactory.

Commander and Mrs. Southby issued invitations for the second annual concert at Sutton, which was as well attended as last year. Mr. Henry Newell was the one blind artiste who contributed to the first class programme, which was otherwise provided by sighted artistes who kindly gave their services—Miss Dorothy McBlain, Miss Elsie Westwood, Miss Phyllis Wallers and the pupils of the Sheila Geere School of Dancing. Mrs. Watson, who arranged the programme sellers and stewards, is to be congratulated. Commander Southby once again appealed to the electors of the Division to support the Greater London Fund for the Blind.



MR. H. C. PREECE, SEC. OF THE G.L.F.,
WITH LADY OXFORD AT A MUSICAL
AT-HOME.

Mr. Preece has addressed Masonic Lodges, Rotary Clubs and many other gatherings; appeals have been made to members of Toc H., the League of Women Helpers, Brotherhoods and Sisterhoods and at political meetings, all in the hope of still more workers on Geranium Day, the pivot of the Fund. Already a Conference has taken place in the Armitage Hall on October 17th, the Chairman being Mr. R. B. Hughes-Buller (Chairman of the Geranium Day Sub-Committee). Mr. W. McG. Eagar also addressed the meeting. Among those present were Mr. H. J. Wagg, Mr. Castello, Mr. Gordon Baker, Mr. Ridler, and Lady Fulton, Lady Sharp, Lady Jacob and Mrs. Alington of the Ladies' Social Committee.

The steady and wonderful response made by churchgoers to the Rev. W. E. Lloyd's sermons on behalf of the Fund must not be overlooked.



"SOUND" LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND Captain Ian Fraser on its Possibilities

LAST month the visit of Captain Sir Beachcroft Towse, V.C., and Mr. Henry J. Wagg to the Elstree film studio to investigate the possibilities of the Blattner process of sound recording was reported. Since then, Captain Ian Fraser, C.B.E., Chairman of St. Dunstan's, has investigated the process. After his visit he mentioned some of the difficulties that he has encountered in trying to find a process suitable as the basis of a Sound Library for the Blind.

"The blind community," said Captain Fraser, "is only one in 1,100 of the population. It is poor and scattered. Consequently, although there are many devices by which inventors could help the blind, the commercial inducement is very small.

"It is therefore essential that a sound-library should be based on a process which has other and more general applications. Ordinary gramophone records are unsuitable, because of the large number that would be needed for a complete book, and the perpetual changing of records would be irritating to the reader.

"To overcome this difficulty special long records were made for me more than ten years ago. These would run for from seven to ten minutes; but in such records the grooves are much closer together, and there is some degree of interference between them. The processes also are costly for a small number of records.

"However, I do not entirely rule out

gramophone records, indeed I am still making inquiries about them. Now that a twelve-minute record is reproduced on a commercial scale for 'talkie' films it may be possible to secure the conditions we want.

"The fact remains that the cost of making one pressing of one record is very great. Commercial records are only cheap because thousands are made from one 'master record.'

"We can only serve the blind world through a Library. Blind people could no more purchase quantities of *sound* books than they can purchase quantities of Braille books, nor would there be much demand for *sound* books in Institutions.

"I am in touch with Mr. Blattner to see if a simple machine, costing but a few pounds, can be devised to read aloud from his wire record. The advantage of the system from our point of view is that no 'master record' requires to be made, and once the apparatus is installed the cost of making one or half-a-dozen records is negligible, that is to say, merely the cost of the wire, and a reader's time. There may be something in it; no doubt there will be, some day, but one should not be too sanguine. There are many difficulties."



EVENING CLASSES AT MARYLEBONE.

SOME of our readers may be interested to know that blind people can attend evening classes at the Marylebone Commercial Institute, Upper Marylebone Street, Great Portland Street, W. 1, and at the Marylebone Literary Institute, St. Marylebone Grammar School, 248, Marylebone Road, N.W. 1.

Among the numerous subjects offered in the Commercial Institute are: Book-keeping, Business Economics and Calculation, Economic Geography, Arithmetic, Secretarial Practice, Shorthand (Pitman and Gregg), Typewriting and Commercial Correspondence, English, Foreign Languages, etc.

The Literary Institute offers a comprehensive syllabus including such subjects as Architecture, Biology, Dramatic Literature and Elocution, Eurhythmics, French and Grammar, Italian Language, Art and Literature, Gymnastics, History, Music, Literature, Psychology, Travel, etc.

All inquiries should be addressed to the Editor of the BEACON who will be pleased to forward them to the respective Institutes.

BLINDNESS AND THE BLIND

SOME INTERESTING OBSERVATIONS



THE following observations on the meaning of blindness, as it may be conceived by a person with sight, and on the characteristic courage and ingenuity with which the blind tackle their problems, are taken from a paper, entitled "The Blind Man's World," which was read last month to a little club of undergraduates at Emanuel College, Cambridge, by Mr. William H. Cary, Jr.

We believe they will be of interest to our readers as they throw the light of a powerful imagination on a difficult subject.

Child's Sense of Alone-ness.

"What one of us, in his childhood, has not thought to himself, as he lay in bed at night in a room utterly dark: Suppose it was always dark like this, and not any sun in the morning. Suppose I was blind—like the old man I saw on the street to-day, feeling with his stick for the edge of the sidewalk—and I could hear people's voices, and dogs barking, and birds singing, but couldn't see a thing. Suppose it was always dark—like this! And perhaps as we thought this, a sudden sense of alone-ness would seize us; frightened, we would valiantly pretend we were not afraid, yet we couldn't help wishing for the reassuring voice and arms of someone—mother or nurse—who meant to us all that was steady and real and comforting, in a great world suddenly strange and fearful.

"Probably most of us, too, in later years, when groping along a dark corridor or entering a thick wood on a black night, have known at least a fleeting recurrence of that childhood sense of awe and insecurity, and have asked ourselves what we should do, if, by some sudden accident, or by some slow, inevitable decay, our light should one day go out. Would not death seem better than this?"

Minor Restrictions and Blindness.

"Of course it is not only to see faces, forms, and colours that one could long for sight, but to escape the dependence and the thousand and one minor restrictions which blindness imposes. A French doctor who went blind at the age of sixty-two has told of his own adjustments to a world of darkness. On a

tandem tricycle he got the exercise that a blind man so particularly needs, by riding about Paris and the country, with a sighted companion in the forward seat.

"One of the greatest helps for a blind person, he said, was to live always in the same house, where objects and their positions were all familiar to him. He could get on well enough when he had 'a place for everything, and everything in its place.' Few people who lose their sight late in life have had courage to travel alone, but he urged those who were blind to increase, in every way possible, their independence, and cited the example of a blind German who had travelled alone from Hamburg to England and back.

Getting About London Alone.

"A man whom I was talking with last week told me some interesting things concerning the way he gets about London alone. I had remarked that the smell of burnt oil and petrol in London was different from that in Paris, and that in Paris from that in New York; and that there was a distinctive smell about the Underground in each of those three cities. He said that to him there were also differences in London streets which probably escaped the sighted person. Some of London, where the old buildings are standing yet, smell 'old,' he said; other parts 'new.' But chiefly the sense of sound helped him to know where he was and how to proceed. There was a difference between the sound of his footfall in streets of low buildings and in streets of high buildings. He could tell in the same way whether he was walking by a stone wall, or a gate, or a hedge; his footfall sounded 'deeper' near a wall, 'lighter' opposite a hedge. And in quiet streets, where there was little or no traffic, he could tell when he was approaching a lamp post. But finding one's way by hearing is very difficult when there has been a fresh snowfall, as the snow tends to deaden all sounds.

"Many blind people seem to have a 'sense of obstacles' which is difficult to account for. For instance, children who have been born blind may run about even an unfamiliar playground and somehow avoid colliding with trees and walls. But although in many blind people this sense is highly developed, it is

often unreliable, and in others it seems to be almost totally lacking. Some declare that it is not auditory but is centred in the forehead. Can it be due to air pressure? I have not found any authoritative explanation.

"The head of the Music Department at the National Institute for the Blind told me, last week, an amusing story. He was walking one day with a friend of his, blind like himself whose perceptions through hearing were unusually acute. Two young girls approached them. 'That girl on the right,' said his

friend, 'is smartly dressed! She thinks a lot of herself!' The man who was telling me this knew the girl and recognised her by her greeting as she passed, and he could tell his friend that he was right. There was something about the sound of her springy step which had given the clue.

"Equally keen and able was the blind soldier from St. Dunstan's who, walking alone in a London fog one day, came upon a sighted man groping to find his way, and promptly set him upon the right road."



MORE OCCUPATIONS FOR THE BLIND

A Plea from Bristol

"BRISTOL BLIND ASYLUM has for many years encouraged the outside employment of blind men and women," says the *Bristol Evening Times & Echo*, in one of two most interesting articles devoted to the plea for wider employment of the blind.

"Three ex-pupils of the school at Westbury-on-Trym were employed by Messrs. Fry some time since.

"Some have become telephone operators and typists in the factories in which they lost their sight. During the War many passed from blind occupations to work in the sighted world.

"The professions, however, seem closed to the blind, as well as to the sighted, in the artizan world. Bishops will not readily accept blind clergy.

"Massage is said to be overdone by War-trained competition. Piano playing is said to be killed by wireless, although blind piano tuners are well employed now, and a Stroud piano factory has had six blind tuners—and needs two more!

"We have in Bristol an excellent elocutionist, but he needs basket work to supplement his professional earnings. Blind certificated elementary school teachers are unable to obtain professional employment; and work at handicrafts.

"A violinist, after several years' successful professional work, asks for workshop employment.

"Such handicrafts as basket and mat-making and knitting are, by their nature, especially suitable for blind persons, but unfair foreign competition robs the worker and the employer of their reward.

"The co-operation of 'sighted' firms in

Bristol could well absorb more blind labour, and such difficulties as accident insurance need only to be faced to be overcome, and will be welcomed by the blind, and all interested in their welfare."

The following list is given of occupations in which blind persons are engaged in Bristol and the immediate neighbourhood:—

"Agents, collectors, etc., 8; basket and cane workers, 30; boot repairers, 1; brush makers, 2; carpenters, 1; clergymen, 1; clerks, typists, telephone operators, 1; dealers (tea agents, shopkeepers), 8; domestic servants 5; farmers, 1; hawkers, 3; home teachers of the blind, 4; knitters, 19; labourers, 1; massage, 4; mat makers, 17; mattress makers, 1; musicians and music teachers, 3; net makers, 1; newsvendors, 1; poultry farmers, 1; straw and string bag makers, 1; piano-forte tuners, 9; miscellaneous, 10."

The writer adds: "Ought not those in charge of the education of the blind to set themselves the task of improving the condition of these entrusted to them, so as to ensure that within, say, the next 20 years there shall be no more candidates for basket-making, mat-making, or knitting, but that instead those leaving school shall take up boot-making and repairing, carpentry, positions as typists, telephone operators, farmers, masseurs, newsvendors, poultry farmers, schoolmasters, seamstresses, and upholsterers. Are there not many other trades and occupations into which blind persons could be introduced if only there was a little more vision and determination?"

Several interesting points are raised in these articles, and we should welcome the opinions of our readers on some of them.

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